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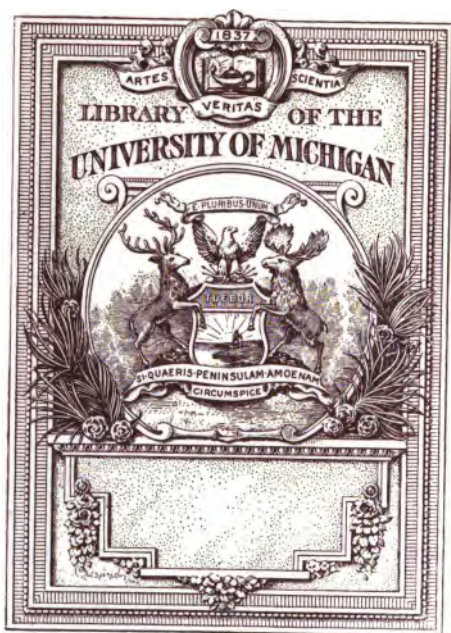
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NOVELS
OF
SIR EDWARD BULWER LYTTON

Library Edition

NOVELS OF LIFE AND MANNERS

VOL. III.

1933



UoM

"A captive in Augusta's towers,
To beauty and her train."

The Disowned, l. 205

THE DISOWNED.

BY

EDWARD BULWER LYTTON

(LORD LYTTON.)

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

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5.3.80 of 220

ADVERTISEMENT.

IN this edition of a work composed in early youth, I have not attempted to remove those faults of construction which may be sufficiently apparent in the plot; but which could not indeed be thoroughly rectified without re-writing the whole work. I can only hope that with the defects of inexperience may be found some of the merits of frank and artless enthusiasm. I have, however, lightened the narrative of certain episodic and irrelevant passages, and relieved the general style of some boyish extravagances of diction. At the time this work was written I was deeply engaged in the study of metaphysics and ethics, — and out of that study grew the character of Algernon Mordaunt. He is represented as a type of the heroism of Christian philosophy, — a union of love and knowledge placed in the midst of sorrow, and laboring on through the pilgrimage of life, strong in the fortitude that comes from belief in heaven.

E. B. L.

KNEBWORTH, *May* 1852.

THE DISOWNED.

CHAPTER I.

I'll tell you a story, if you please to attend.

Limbo, by G. KNIGHT.

IT was the evening of a soft, warm day in the May of 17—. The sun had already set, and the twilight was gathering slowly over the large, still masses of wood which lay on either side of one of those green lanes so peculiar to England. Here and there the outline of the trees irregularly shrank back from the road, leaving broad patches of waste land covered with fern, and the yellow blossoms of the dwarf furze, and at more distant intervals, thick clusters of rushes, from which came the small hum of gnats,—those “evening revellers,”—alternately rising and sinking in the customary manner of their unknown sports, till, as the shadows grew darker and darker, their thin and airy shapes were no longer distinguishable, and no solitary token of life or motion broke the voiceless monotony of the surrounding woods.

The first sound which invaded the silence came from the light, quick footsteps of a person whose youth betrayed itself in its elastic and unmeasured tread, and in the gay, free carol which broke out by fits and starts upon the gentle stillness of the evening.

VOL. I. — 1

There was something rather indicative of poetical taste than musical science in the selection of this vesper hymn, which always commenced with,—

'T is merry, 't is merry, in good, green wood,
and never proceeded a syllable farther than the end of the second line,—

When birds are about and singing ;
from the last word of which, after a brief pause, it invariably started forth into joyous "iteration."

Presently a heavier yet still more rapid step than that of the youth was heard behind; and, as it overtook the latter, a loud, clear, good-humored voice gave the salutation of the evening. The tone in which this courtesy was returned was frank, distinct, and peculiarly harmonious.

"Good-evening, my friend. How far is it to W——? I hope I am not out of the direct road?"

"To W——, sir?" said the man, touching his hat, as he perceived, in spite of the dusk, something in the air and voice of his new acquaintance which called for a greater degree of respect than he was at first disposed to accord to a pedestrian traveller,— "to W——, sir? Why, you will not surely go there to-night? It is more than eight miles distant, and the roads none of the best."

"Now, a curse on all rogues!" quoth the youth, with a serious sort of vivacity. "Why, the miller, at the foot of the hill, assured me I should be at my journey's end in less than an hour."

"He may have said right, sir," returned the man; "yet you will not reach W—— in twice that time."

"How do you mean?" said the younger stranger.

"Why, that you may for once force a miller to speak truth in spite of himself, and make a public-house, about three miles hence, the end of your day's journey."

"Thank you for the hint," said the youth. "Does the house you speak of lie on the roadside?"

"No, sir; the lane branches off about two miles hence, and you must then turn to the right; but *till* then our way is the same, and if you would not prefer your own company to mine, we can trudge on together."

"With all my heart," rejoined the younger stranger; "and not the less willingly from the brisk pace you walk. I thought I had few equals in pedestrianism; but it should not be for a small wager that I would undertake to keep up with you."

"Perhaps, sir," said the man, laughing, "I have had in the course of my life a better usage and a longer experience of my heels than you have."

Somewhat startled by a speech of so equivocal a meaning, the youth for the first time turned round to examine, as well as the increasing darkness would permit, the size and appearance of his companion. He was not perhaps too well satisfied with his survey. His fellow-pedestrian was about six feet high, and of a correspondent girth of limb and frame, which would have made him fearful odds in any encounter where bodily strength was the best means of conquest. Notwithstanding the mildness of the weather, he was closely buttoned in a rough greatcoat, which was well calculated to give all due effect to the athletic proportions of the wearer.

There was a pause of some moments.

"This is but a wild, savage sort of scene for England, sir, in this day of new-fashioned ploughs and farming improvements," said the tall stranger, looking round at

the ragged wastes and grim woods which lay steeped in the shade beside and before them.

"True," answered the youth; "and, in a few years, agricultural innovation will scarcely leave, even in these wastes, a single furze-blossom for the bee, or a tuft of greensward for the grasshopper; but, however unpleasant the change may be for us foot-travellers, we must not repine at what they tell us is so sure a witness of the prosperity of the country."

"*They* tell us! *who* tell us?" exclaimed the stranger, with great vivacity. "Is it the puny and spiritless artisan, or the debased and crippled slave of the counter and the till, or the sallow speculator on morals, who would mete us out our liberty, our happiness, our very feelings, by the yard and inch and fraction? No, no; let *them* follow what the books and precepts of their own wisdom teach them; let them cultivate more highly the lands they have already parcelled out by dikes and fences, and leave, though at scanty intervals, some green patches of unpolluted land for the poor man's beast and the free man's foot."

"You are an enthusiast on this subject," said the younger traveller, not a little surprised at the tone and words of the last speech; "and if I were not just about to commence the world with a firm persuasion that enthusiasm on any matter is a great obstacle to success, I could be as warm, though not so eloquent as yourself."

"Ah, sir," said the stranger, sinking into a more natural and careless tone, "I have a better right than I imagine you can claim to repine or even to inveigh against the boundaries which are day by day, and hour by hour, encroaching upon what I have learned to look upon as my own territory. You were, just before I joined you, singing an old song. I honor you for your

taste; and, no offence, sir, but a sort of fellowship in feeling made me take the liberty to accost you. I am no very great scholar in other things, but I owe my present circumstances of life solely to my fondness for those old songs and quaint madrigals. And I believe no person can better apply to himself Will Shakespeare's invitation:—

‘ Under the greenwood tree
Who loves to lie with me,
And tune his merry note
Unto the sweet bird's throat,
Come hither, come hither, come hither ;
Here shall he see
No enemy
But winter and rough weather.’”

Relieved from his former fear, but with increased curiosity at this quotation, which was half said, half sung, in a tone which seemed to evince a hearty relish for the sense of the words, the youth replied,—

“Truly, I did not expect to meet among the travellers of this wild country with so well-stored a memory. And, indeed, I should have imagined that the only persons to whom your verses could exactly have applied were those honorable vagrants from the Nile, whom in vulgar language we term gypsies.”

“Precisely so, sir,” answered the tall stranger, indifferently; “precisely so. It is to that ancient body that I belong.”

“The devil you do!” quoth the youth, in unsophisticated surprise; “the progress of education is indeed astonishing!”

“Why,” answered the stranger, laughing, “to tell you the truth, sir, I am a gypsy by inclination, not birth.

The illustrious Bamfylde Moore Carew is not the only example of one of gentle blood and honorable education whom the fleshpots of Egypt have seduced."

"I congratulate myself," quoth the youth, in a tone that might have been in jest, "upon becoming acquainted with a character at once so respectable and so novel; and to return your quotation in the way of a compliment, I cry out with the most fashionable author of Elizabeth's days, —

‘Oh for a bowl of fat Canary,
Rich Palermo, — sparkling sherry.’

in order to drink to our better acquaintance."

"Thank you, sir, — thank you," cried the strange gypsy, seemingly delighted with the spirit with which his young acquaintance appeared to enter into his character, and his quotation from a class of authors at that time much less known and appreciated than at present; "and if you have seen already enough of the world to take up with ale when neither Canary, Palermo, nor sherry are forthcoming, I will promise, at least, to pledge you in large draughts of that homely beverage. What say you to passing a night with us? Our tents are yet more at hand than the public-house of which I spoke to you."

The young man hesitated a moment, then replied, —

"I will answer you frankly, my friend, even though I may find cause to repent my confidence. I have a few guineas about me, which, though not a large sum, are *my all*. Now, however ancient and honorable your fraternity may be, they labor under a sad confusion, I fear, in their ideas of *meum* and *tuum*."

"Faith, sir, I believe you are right; and were you some years older, I think you would not have favored me

with the same disclosure you have done now, — but you may be quite easy on that score. If you were made of gold, the rascals would not filch off the corner of your garment as long as you were under my protection. Does this assurance satisfy you ? ”

“ Perfectly,” said the youth: “ and now, how far are we from your encampment ? I assure you I am all eagerness to be among a set of which I have witnessed such a specimen.”

“ Nay, nay,” returned the gypsy, “ you must not judge of all my brethren by me ; I confess that they are but a rough tribe. However, I love them dearly ; and am only the more inclined to think them honest to each other, because they are rogues to all the rest of the world.”

By this time our travellers had advanced nearly two miles since they had commenced companionship ; and, at a turn in the lane, about three hundred yards further on, they caught a glimpse of a distant fire, burning brightly through the dim trees. They quickened their pace, and, striking a little out of their path into a common, soon approached two tents, the Arab homes of the vagrant and singular people with whom the gypsy claimed brotherhood and alliance.

CHAPTER II.

Here we securely live and eat
The cream of meat ;
And keep eternal fires
By which we sit and *do divine*.

HERRICK. — *Ode to Sir Clipseby Crew.*

AROUND a fire which blazed and crackled beneath the large seething-pot that seemed an emblem of the mystery and a promise of the good cheer which are the supposed characteristics of the gypsy race, were grouped seven or eight persons, upon whose swarthy and strong countenances the irregular and fitful flame cast a picturesque and not unbecoming glow. All of these, with the exception of an old crone who was tending the pot, and a little boy who was feeding the fire with sundry fragments of stolen wood, started to their feet upon the entrance of the stranger.

“What ho, my bob cuffins,” cried the gypsy guide; “I have brought you a gentry cove, to whom you will show all proper respect; and hark ye, my maunders, if ye dare beg, borrow, or steal a single croaker, ay, but a bawbee of him, I’ll — but ye know me.” The gypsy stopped abruptly, and turned an eye, in which menace vainly struggled with good-humor, upon each of his brethren, as they submissively bowed to him and his *protégé*, and poured forth a profusion of promises, to which their admonitor did not even condescend to listen. He threw off his greatcoat, doubled it down by the best place near the fire, and made the youth forthwith possess

himself of the seat it afforded. He then lifted the cover of the mysterious caldron. "Well, Mort," cried he to the old woman, as he bent wistfully down, "what have we here?"

"Two ducks, three chickens, and a rabbit, with some potatoes," growled the old hag, who claimed the usual privilege of her culinary office to be as ill-tempered as she pleased.

"Good!" said the gypsy; "and now, Mim, my cull, go to the other tent, and ask its inhabitants, in my name, to come here and sup. Bid them bring *their* caldron to eke out ours, — I'll find the lush."

With these words (which Mim, a short, swarthy member of the gang, with a countenance too astute to be pleasing, instantly started forth to obey) the gypsy stretched himself at full length by the youth's side, and began reminding him, with some jocularly and at some length, of his promise to drink to their better acquaintance.

Something there was in the scene, the fire, the caldron, the intent figure and withered countenance of the old woman, the grouping of the other forms, the rude but not unpicturesque tent, the dark, still woods on either side, with the deep and cloudless skies above, as the stars broke forth one by one upon the silent air, which (to use the orthodox phrase of the novelist) would not have been wholly unworthy the bold pencil of Salvator himself.

The youth eyed, with that involuntary respect which personal advantages always command, the large yet symmetrical proportions of his wild companion; nor was the face which belonged to that frame much less deserving of attention. Though not handsome, it was both shrewd and prepossessing in its expression: the forehead was

prominent; the brows overhung the eyes, which were large, dark, and, unlike those of the tribe in general, rather calm than brilliant; the complexion, though sunburnt, was not swarthy; and the face was carefully and cleanly shaved, so as to give all due advantage of contrast to the brown, luxuriant locks which fell, rather in flakes than curls, on either side of the healthful and manly cheeks. In age he was about thirty-five, and though his air and mien were assuredly not lofty, nor aristocratic, yet they were strikingly above the bearing of his vagabond companions; those companions were in all respects of the ordinary race of gypsies, — the cunning and flashing eye, the raven locks, the dazzling teeth, the bronzed color, and the low, slight, active form, were as strongly their distinguishing characteristics as the tokens of all their tribe.

But to these the appearance of the youth presented a striking and beautiful contrast.

He had only just passed the stage of boyhood; perhaps he might have seen eighteen summers, — probably not so many. He had, in imitation of his companion, and perhaps from mistaken courtesy to his new society, doffed his hat; and the attitude which he had chosen fully developed the noble and intellectual turn of his head and throat. His hair, as yet preserved from the disfiguring fashions of the day, was of a deep auburn, which was rapidly becoming of a more chestnut hue, and curled in short close curls from the nape of the neck to the commencement of a forehead singularly white and high. His brows, finely and lightly pencilled, and his long lashes of the darkest dye, gave a deeper and perhaps softer shade than they otherwise would have worn to eyes quick and observant in their expression, and of a light hazel in their color. His cheek was very fair, and the red light

of the fire cast an artificial tint of increased glow upon a complexion that had naturally rather bloom than color; while a dark riding-frock set off in their full beauty the fine outline of his chest, and the slender symmetry of his frame.

But it was neither his features nor his form, eminently handsome as they were, which gave the principal charm to the young stranger's appearance, — it was the strikingly bold, buoyant, frank, and almost joyous expression which presided over all. *There* seemed to dwell the first glow and life of youth, undimmed by a single fear, and unbaffled in a single hope. *There* were the elastic spring, the inexhaustible wealth of energies, which defied, in their exulting pride, the heaviness of sorrow and the harassments of time. It was a face that, while it filled you with some melancholy foreboding of the changes and chances which must, in the inevitable course of fate, cloud the openness of the unwrinkled brow, and soberize the fire of the daring and restless eye, instilled also within you some assurance of triumph, and some omen of success, — a vague but powerful sympathy with the adventurous and cheerful spirit which appeared literally to speak in its expression. It was a face you might imagine in one born under a prosperous star; and you felt, as you gazed, a confidence in that bright countenance, which, like the shield of the British prince,¹ seemed possessed with a spell to charm into impotence the evil spirits who menaced its possessor.

"Well, sir," said his friend the gypsy, who had in his turn been surveying with admiration the sinewy and agile frame of his young guest, — "well, sir, how fares your appetite? Old Dame Bingo will be mortally offended if you do not do ample justice to her good cheer."

¹ Prince Arthur. — See "The Faery Queen."

"If so," answered our traveller, who, young as he was, had learned already the grand secret of making, in every situation, a female friend, — "if so, I shall be likely to offend her still more."

"And how, my pretty master?" said the old crone, with an iron smile.

"Why, I shall be bold enough to reconcile matters with a kiss, Mrs. Bingo," answered the youth.

"Ha! ha!" shouted the tall gypsy; "it is many a long day since my old Mort slapped a gallant's face for such an affront. But here come our messmates. Good-evening, my mumpers, — make your bows to this gentleman who has come to bowse with us to-night. 'Gad, we'll show him that old ale's none the worse for keeping company with the moon's darlings. Come, sit down, sit down. Where's the cloth, ye ill-mannered loons, and the knives and platters? Have we no holiday customs for strangers, think ye? Mim, my cove, off to *my* caravan, — bring out the knives, and all other rattle-traps; and hark ye, my cuffin, this small key opens the inner hole, where you will find two barrels; bring one of them. I'll warrant it of the best, for the brewer himself drank some of the same sort but two hours before I *nimmed* them. Come, stump, my cull, make yourself wings. Ho, Dame Bingo, is not that pot of thine seething yet? Ah, my young gentleman, you commence betimes; so much the better: if love's a summer's day, we all know how early a summer morning begins," added the jovial Egyptian, in a lower voice (feeling perhaps that he was only understood by himself), as he gazed complacently on the youth, who, with that happy facility of making himself everywhere at home, so uncommon to his countrymen, was already paying compliments suited to their understanding to two fair daughters of the tribe,

who had entered with the new-comers. Yet had he too much craft or delicacy, call it which you will, to continue his addresses to that limit where ridicule or jealousy, from the male part of the assemblage, might commence; on the contrary, he soon turned to the men, and addressed them with a familiarity so frank, and so suited to their taste, that he grew no less rapidly in their favor than he had already done in that of the women; and, when the contents of the two caldrons were at length set upon the coarse but clean cloth which, in honor of his arrival, covered the sod, it was in the midst of a loud and universal peal of laughter, which some broad witticism of the young stranger had produced, that the party sat down to their repast.

Bright were the eyes and sleek the tresses of the damsel who placed herself by the side of the stranger, and many were the alluring glances and insinuated compliments which replied to his open admiration and profuse flattery; but still there was nothing exclusive in his attentions. Perhaps an ignorance of the customs of his entertainers, and a consequent discreet fear of offending them, restrained him; or perhaps he found ample food for occupation in the plentiful dainties which his host heaped before him.

"Now tell me," said the gypsy chief (for chief he appeared to be), "if we lead not a merrier life than you dreamed of; or would you have us change our coarse fare and our simple tents, our vigorous limbs and free hearts, for the meagre board, the monotonous chamber, the diseased frame, and the toiling, careful, and withered spirit of some miserable mechanic?"

"Change!" cried the youth, with an earnestness which, if affected, was an exquisite counterfeit,—"by Heaven, I would change with you myself!"

"Bravo, my fine cove!" cried the host, and all the gang echoed their sympathy with his applause.

The youth continued: "Meat, and that plentiful; ale, and that strong; women, and those pretty ones: what can man desire more?"

"Ay," cried the host, "and all for nothing, — no, not even a tax: who else in this kingdom can say that? Come, Mim, push round the ale."

And the ale *was* pushed round, and if coarse the merriment, loud at least was the laugh that rang ever and anon from the old tent; and though, at moments, something in the guest's eye and lip might have seemed, to a very shrewd observer, a little wandering and absent, yet, upon the whole, he was almost as much at ease as the rest, and if he was not quite as talkative, he was to the full as noisy.

By degrees, as the hour grew later and the barrel less heavy, the conversation changed into one universal clatter. Some told their feats in beggary; others their achievements in theft; not a viand they had fed on but had its appropriate legend; even the old rabbit, which had been as tough as old rabbit can well be, had not been honestly taken from his burrow, — no less a person than Mim himself had purloined it from a widow's footman, who was carrying it to an old maid from her nephew the Squire.

"Silence!" cried the host, who loved talking as well as the rest, and who for the last ten minutes had been vainly endeavoring to obtain attention, — "silence! my maunders; it's late, and we shall have the queer cuffs¹ upon us if we keep it up much longer. What, ho, Mim! are you still gabbling at the foot of the table when your betters are talking? As sure as my name's

¹ Magistrates.

King Cole, I'll choke you with your own rabbit-skin if you don't hush your prating cheat; nay, never look so abashed, — if you *will* make a noise, come forward and sing us a gypsy song. You see, my young sir" (turning to his guest), "that we are not without our pretensions to the fine arts."

At this order Mim started forth, and taking his station at the right hand of the *soi-disant* King Cole, began the following song, the chorus of which was chanted in full diapason by the whole group, with the additional force of emphasis that knives, feet, and fists could bestow.

THE GYPSY'S SONG.

The king to his hall, and the steed to his stall,
 And the cit to his bilking board;
 But we are not bound to an acre of ground,
 For our home is the houseless sward.
 We sow not, nor toil; yet we glean from the soil
 As much as its reapers do;
 And wherever we rove, we feed on the cove
 Who gibes at the mumping crew.

Chorus — So the king to his hall, etc.

We care not a straw for the limbs of the law,
 Nor a fig for the *cuffin queer*;
 While Hodge and his neighbor shall lavish and labor,
 Our tent is as sure of its cheer.

Chorus — So the king to his hall, etc.

The worst have an awe of the *harman's*¹ claw,
 And the best will avoid the *trap*;²
 But our wealth is as free of the bailiff's *see*
 As our necks of the *twisting crap*.³

Chorus — So the king to his hall, etc.

¹ Constable.

² Bailiff.

³ Gallows.

They say it is sweet to win the meat
For the which one has sorely wrought ;
But I never could find that we lacked the mind
For the food that has cost us nought.
Chorus — So the king to his hall, etc.

And when we have ceased from our fearless feast,
Why, our *jigger*¹ will need no bars ;
Our sentry shall be on the owlet's tree,
And our lamps the glorious stars.

Chorus.

So the king to his hall, and the steed to his stall,
And the cit to his bilking board ;
But we are not bound to an acre of ground,
For our home is the houseless sward.

Rude as was this lawless stave, the spirit with which it was sung atoned to the young stranger for its obscurity and quaintness; as for his host, that curious personage took a lusty and prominent part in the chorus,—nor did the old woods refuse their share of the burden, but sent back a merry echo to the chief's deep voice, and the harsher notes of his jovial brethren.

When the glee had ceased, King Cole rose, the whole band followed his example, the cloth was cleared in a trice, the barrel, — oh! what a falling-off was there! — was rolled into a corner of the tent, and the crew to whom the awning belonged began to settle themselves to rest; while those who owned the other encampment marched forth with King Cole at their head. Leaning with no light weight upon his guest's arm, the lover of ancient minstrelsy poured into the youth's ear a strain of eulogy, rather eloquent than coherent, upon the scene they had just witnessed.

¹ Door.

"What," cried his majesty, in an enthusiastic tone, — "what can be so truly regal as our state? Can any man control us? Are we not above all laws? Are we not the most despotic of kings? Nay, more than the kings of earth, — are we not the kings of Fairyland itself? Do we not realize the golden dreams of the old rhymers, — luxurious dogs that they were? Who would not cry out, —

'Blest silent groves! Oh, may ye be

Forever Mirth's best nursery!

May pure Contents

Forever pitch *their tents*

Upon these downs, these meads, these rocks, these mountains'?"

Uttering this notable extract from the thrice-honored Sir Henry Wotton, King Cole turned abruptly from the common, entered the wood which skirted it, and, only attended by his guest and his minister Mim, came suddenly, by an unexpected and picturesque opening in the trees, upon one of those itinerant vehicles termed caravans; he ascended the few steps which led to the entrance, opened the door, and was instantly in the arms of a pretty and young woman. On seeing our hero (for such we fear the youth is likely to become) she drew back with a blush not often found upon regal cheeks.

"Pooh," said King Cole, half tauntingly, half fondly, — "pooh, Lucy, blushes are garden flowers, and ought never to be found wild in the woods;" then changing his tone, he said, "Come, put some fresh straw in the corner; this stranger honors our palace to-night. Mim, unload thyself of our royal treasures, — watch without, and vanish from within!"

Depositing on his majesty's floor the appurtenances

VOL. I. — 2

of the regal supper-table, Mim made his respectful adieus, and disappeared; meanwhile the queen scattered some fresh straw over a mattress in the narrow chamber, and laying over all a sheet of singularly snowy hue, made her guest some apology for the badness of his lodging; this King Cole interrupted by a most elaborately noisy yawn, and a declaration of extreme sleepiness. "Now, Lucy, let us leave the gentleman to what he will like better than soft words, even from a queen. Good-night, sir; we shall be stirring at daybreak;" and with this farewell King Cole took the lady's arm, and retired with her into an inner compartment of the caravan.

Left to himself, our hero looked round with surprise at the exceeding neatness which reigned over the whole apartment. But what chiefly engrossed the attention of one to whose early habits books had always been treasures, were several volumes, ranged in comely shelves fenced with wire-work, on either side of the fireplace. "Courage," thought he, as he stretched himself on his humble couch; "my adventures have commenced well. A gypsy tent, to be sure, is nothing very new, but a gypsy who quotes poetry and enjoys a modest wife, speaks better than books do for the improvement of the world."

CHAPTER III.

Hath not old custom made this life more sweet
Than that of painted pomp ?

As You Like It.

THE sun broke cheerfully through the small lattice of the caravan as the youth opened his eyes and saw the good-humored countenance of his gypsy host bending over him complacently.

"You slept so soundly, sir, that I did not like to disturb you; but my good wife only waits your rising to have all ready for breakfast."

"It were a thousand pities," cried the guest, leaping from his bed, "that so pretty a face should look cross on my account, so I will not keep her waiting an instant."

The gypsy smiled, as he answered, "I require no professional help from the devil, sir, to foretell your fortune."

"No! — and what is it?"

"Honor, reputation, success, — all that are ever won by a soft tongue, if it be backed by a bold heart."

Bright and keen was the flash which shot over the countenance of the one for whom this prediction was made, as he listened to it with a fondness for which his reason rebuked him. He turned aside with a sigh, which did not escape the gypsy, and bathed his face in the water which the provident hand of the good woman had set out for his lavations.

"Well," said his host, when the youth had finished his brief toilet, "suppose we breathe the fresh air while Lucy smooths your bed and prepares the breakfast."

"With all my heart," replied the youth, and they descended the steps which led into the wood. It was a beautiful, fresh morning; the air was like a draught from a spirit's fountain, and filled the heart with new youth, and the blood with a rapturous delight; the leaves — the green, green leaves of spring — were quivering on the trees, among which the happy birds fluttered, and breathed the gladness of their souls in song. While the dewdrops, that

Strewed
A baptism o'er the flowers,

gave back, in their million mirrors, the reflected smiles of the cloudless and rejoicing sun.

"Nature," said the gypsy, "has bestowed on her children a gorgeous present in such a morning."

"True," said the youth; "and you, of us two, perhaps, only deserve it. As for me, when I think of the long road of dust, heat, and toil, that lies before me, I could almost wish to stop here and ask admission into the gypsies' tents."

"You could not do a wiser thing," said the gypsy, gravely.

"But fate leaves me no choice," continued the youth, as seriously as if he were in earnest; "and I must quit you immediately after I have a second time tasted of your hospitable fare."

"If it must be so," answered the gypsy, "I will see you at least a mile or two on your road." The youth thanked him for a promise which his curiosity made acceptable, and they turned once more to the caravan.

The meal, however obtained, met with as much honor as it could possibly have received from the farmer from whom its materials were borrowed.

It was not without complacency that the worthy pair beheld the notice that their guest lavished upon a fair, curly-headed boy of about three years old, the sole child and idol of the gypsy potentates. But they did not perceive, when the youth rose to depart, that he slipped into the folds of the child's dress a ring of some value, the only one he possessed.

"And now," said he, after having thanked his entertainers for their hospitality, "I must say good-by to your flock, and set out upon my day's journey."

Lucy, despite her bashfulness, shook hands with her handsome guest, and the latter, accompanied by the gypsy chief, strolled down the encampments.

Open and free was his parting farewell to the inmates of the two tents, and liberal was the hand which showered upon all — especially on the damsel who had been his Thais of the evening feast — the silver coins which made no inconsiderable portion of his present property.

It was amidst the oracular wishes and favorable predictions of the whole crew that he recommenced his journey with the gypsy chief.

When the tents were fairly out of sight, and not till then, King Cole broke the silence which had as yet subsisted between them.

"I suppose, my young gentleman, that you expect to meet some of your friends or relations at W——? I know not what they will say when they hear where you have spent the night."

"Indeed!" said the youth; "whoever hears my adventures, relation or not, will be delighted with my description; but in sober earnest, I expect to find no one at W—— more my friend than a surly innkeeper, unless it be his dog."

"Why, they surely do not suffer a stripling of your

youth, and evident quality, to wander alone!" cried King Cole, in undisguised surprise.

The young traveller made no prompt answer, but bent down as if to pluck a wild-flower which grew by the roadside; after a pause, he said, —

"Nay, Master Cole, you must not set me the example of playing the inquisitor, or you cannot guess how troublesome I shall be. To tell you truth, I am dying with curiosity to know something more about you than you may be disposed to tell me; you have already confessed that, however boon companions your gypsies may be, it is not among gypsies that you were born and bred."

King Cole laughed; perhaps he was not ill-pleased by the curiosity of his guest, nor by the opportunity it afforded him of being his own hero.

"My story, sir," said he, "would be soon told, if you thought it worth the hearing, nor does it contain anything which should prevent my telling it."

"If so," quoth the youth, "I shall conceive your satisfying my request a still greater favor than those you have already bestowed upon me."

The gypsy relaxed his pace into an indolent saunter, as he commenced: —

"The first scene that I remember was similar to that which you witnessed last night. The savage tent, and the green moor, the fagot blaze, the eternal pot, with its hissing note of preparation, the old dame who tended it, and the ragged urchins who learned from its contents the first reward of theft, and the earliest temptation to it, — all these are blended into agreeable confusion as the primal impressions of my childhood. The woman who nurtured me as my mother was rather capricious than kind, and my infancy passed away, like that of

more favored scions of fortune, in alternate chastisement and caresses. In good truth, Kinching Meg had the shrillest voice and the heaviest hand of the whole crew, and I cannot complain of injustice, since she treated me no worse than the rest. Notwithstanding the irregularity of my education, I grew up strong and healthy, and my reputed mother had taught me so much fear for herself that she left me none for anything else; accordingly, I became bold, reckless, and adventurous, and at the age of thirteen was as thorough a reprobate as the tribe could desire. At that time a singular change befell me; we (that is, my mother and myself) were begging, not many miles hence, at the door of a rich man's house, in which the mistress lay on her death-bed. That mistress was my *real* mother, from whom Meg had stolen me in my first year of existence. Whether it was through the fear of conscience, or the hope of reward, no sooner had Meg learned the dangerous state of my poor mother, the constant grief which they said had been the sole, though slow cause of her disease, and the large sums which had been repeatedly offered for my recovery, — no sooner, I say, did Meg ascertain all these particulars, than she fought her way up to the sick-chamber, fell on her knees before the bed, owned her crime, and produced myself. Various little proofs of time, place, circumstance: the clothing I had worn when stolen, and which was still preserved, joined to the striking likeness I bore to both my parents, especially to my father, silenced all doubt and incredulity; I was welcomed home with a joy which it is in vain to describe. My return seemed to recall my mother from the grave; she lingered on for many months longer than her physicians thought it possible, and when she died, her last words commended me to my father's protection.

"My surviving parent needed no such request. He lavished upon me all that superfluity of fondness and food of which those good people who are resolved to spoil their children are so prodigal. He could not bear the idea of sending me to school; accordingly he took a tutor for me, a simple-hearted, gentle, kind man, who possessed a vast store of learning rather curious than useful. He was a tolerable, and at least an enthusiastic, antiquarian, — a more than tolerable poetaster; and he had a prodigious budget full of old ballads and songs, which *he* loved better to teach and *I* to learn than all the 'Latin, Greek, geography, astronomy, and the use of the globes,' which my poor father had so sedulously bargained for.

"Accordingly, I became exceedingly well-informed in all the 'precious conceits' and 'golden garlands' of our British ancients, and continued exceedingly ignorant of everything else, save and except a few of the most fashionable novels of the day, and the contents of six lying volumes of voyages and travels, which flattered both my appetite for the wonderful and my love of the adventurous. My studies, such as they were, were not by any means suited to curb or direct the vagrant tastes my childhood had acquired; on the contrary, the old poets, with their luxurious description of the 'green wood,' and the forest life; the fashionable novelists, with their spirited accounts of the wanderings of some fortunate rogue; and the ingenious travellers, with their wild fables, so dear to the imagination of every boy, only fomented within me a strong though secret regret at my change of life, and a restless disgust to the tame home and bounded roamings to which I was condemned. When I was about seventeen, my father sold his property (which he had become possessed of in right of my

mother), and transferred the purchase-money to the security of the Funds. Shortly afterwards he died: the bulk of his fortune became mine; the remainder was settled upon a sister, many years older than myself, who, in consequence of her marriage and residence in a remote part of Wales, I had never yet seen.

“ Now, then, I was perfectly free and unfettered; my guardian lived in Scotland, and left me entirely to the guidance of my tutor, who was both too simple and too indolent to resist my inclinations. I went to London, became acquainted with a set of most royal scamps, frequented the theatres and the taverns, the various resorts which constitute the gayeties of a blood just above the middle class, and was one of the noisiest and wildest ‘ blades ’ that ever heard ‘ the chimes by midnight,’ and the magistrate’s lecture for matins. I was a sort of leader among the jolly dogs I consorted with. My earlier education gave a raciness and nature to my delineations of ‘ life,’ which delighted them. But, somehow or other, I grew wearied of this sort of existence. About a year after I was of age, my fortune was more than three parts spent; I fell ill with drinking, and grew dull with remorse, — need I add that my comrades left me to myself? A fit of the spleen, especially if accompanied with duns makes one woefully misanthropic; so when I recovered from my illness I set out on a tour through Great Britain and France, — alone, and principally on foot. Oh, the rapture of shaking off the half friends and cold formalities of society, and finding one’s self all unfettered, with no companion but nature, no guide but youth, and no flatterer but hope!

“ Well, my young friend, I travelled for two years, and saw, even in that short time, enough of this busy world to weary and disgust me with its ordinary customs.

I was not made to be polite, still less to be ambitious. I sighed after the coarse comrades and the free tents of my first associates, and a thousand remembrances of the gypsy wanderings, steeped in all the green and exhilarating colors of childhood, perpetually haunted my mind. On my return from my wanderings, I found a letter from my sister, who, having become a widow, had left Wales, and had now fixed her residence in a well-visited watering-place in the west of England. I had never yet seen her, and her letter was a fine, ladylike sort of epistle, with a great deal of romance and a very little sense, written in an extremely pretty hand, and ending with a quotation from Pope. (I never could endure Pope, nor indeed any of the poets of the days of Anne and her successors.) It was a beautiful season of the year; I had been inured to pedestrian excursions, so I set off on foot to see my nearest surviving relative. On the way, I fell in (though on a very different spot) with the very encampment you saw last night. By Heavens! that was a merry meeting to me; I joined, and journeyed with them for several days, — never do I remember a happier time. Then, after many years of bondage, and stiffness, and accordance with the world, I found myself at ease, like a released bird; with what zest did I join in the rude jokes and the knavish tricks, the stolen feasts and the roofless nights of those careless vagabonds.

“I left my fellow-travellers at the entrance of the town where my sister lived. Now came the contrast. Somewhat hot, rather coarsely clad, and covered with the dust of a long summer’s day, I was ushered into a little drawing-room, eighteen feet by twelve, as I was afterwards somewhat pompously informed. A flaunting carpet, green, red, and yellow, covered the floor. A full-length picture of a thin woman, looking most agree-

ably ill-tempered, stared down at me from the chimney-piece; three stuffed birds — how emblematic of domestic life! — stood stiff and imprisoned, even after death, in a glass cage. A fire-screen and a bright fireplace, chairs covered with holland to preserve them from the atmosphere, and long mirrors wrapped, as to the framework, in yellow muslin, to keep off the flies, finish the panorama of this watering-place mansion. The door opened; silks rustled, — voice shrieked ‘My brother!’ And a figure — a thin figure, the original of the picture over the chimney-piece — rushed in.”

“I can well fancy her joy,” said the youth.

“You can do no such thing, begging your pardon, sir,” resumed King Cole. “She had no joy at all; she was exceedingly surprised and disappointed. In spite of my early adventures, I had nothing picturesque or romantic about me at all. I was very thirsty, and I called for beer; I was very tired, and I lay down on the sofa; I wore thick shoes, and small buckles; and my clothes were made, God knows where, and were certainly put on God knows how. My sister was miserably ashamed of me; she had not even the manners to disguise it. In a higher rank of life than that which she held, she would have suffered far less mortification; for I fancy great people pay but little *real* attention to externals. Even if a man of rank is vulgar, it makes no difference in the orbit in which he moves; but your ‘genteel gentlewomen’ are so terribly dependent upon what Mrs. Tomkins will say; so very uneasy about their relations, and the opinion they are held in; and, above all, so made up of appearances and clothes, — so undone if they do not eat, drink, and talk *à la mode*, that I can fancy no shame like that of my poor sister having found, and *being found with* a vulgar brother.

"I saw how unwelcome I was, and I did not punish myself by a long visit. I left her house, and returned towards London. On my road I again met with my gypsy friends; the warmth of their welcome enchanted me,—you may guess the rest. I stayed with them so long that I could not bear to leave them; I re-entered their crew; I am one among them. Not that I have become altogether and solely of the tribe; I still leave them whenever the whim seizes me, and repair to the great cities and thoroughfares of man. There I am soon driven back again to my favorite and fresh fields, as a reed upon a wild stream is dashed back upon the green rushes from which it has been torn. You perceive that I have many comforts and distinctions above the rest; for, alas, sir, there is no society, however free and democratic, where wealth will not create an aristocracy. The remnant of my fortune provides me with my unostentatious equipage, and the few luxuries it contains; it repays secretly to the poor what my fellow-vagrants occasionally filch from them; it allows me to curb among the crew all the grosser and heavier offences against the law to which want might otherwise compel them; and it serves to keep up that sway and ascendancy which my superior education and fluent spirits enabled me at first to attain. Though not *legally* their king, I assume that title over the few encampments with which I am accustomed to travel, and you perceive that I have given my simple name both to the jocular and kingly dignity of which the old song will often remind you. My story is done."

"Not quite," said his companion: "your wife? How came you by that blessing?"

"Ah! thereby hangs a pretty and a love-sick tale, which would not sound ill in an ancient ballad; but I

will content myself with briefly sketching it. Lucy is the daughter of a gentleman farmer; about four years ago I fell in love with her. I wooed her clandestinely, and at last I owned I was a gypsy; I did not add my birth nor fortune, — no, I was full of the romance of the Nut-brown Maid's lover, and attempted a trial of woman's affection, which even in these days was not disappointed. Still her father would not consent to our marriage, till, very luckily, things went bad with him: corn, crops, cattle,—the deuce was in them all; an execution was in his house, and a writ out against his person. I settled these matters for him, and in return received a father-in-law's blessing, and we are now the best friends in the world. Poor Lucy is perfectly reconciled to her caravan and her wandering husband, and has never, I believe, once repented the day on which she became the gypsy's wife!"

"I thank you heartily for your history," said the youth, who had listened very attentively to this detail; "and though my happiness and pursuits are centred in that world which you despise, yet I confess that I feel a sensation very like envy at your singular choice; and I would not dare to ask of my heart whether that choice is not happier, as it is certainly more philosophical than mine."

They had now reached a part of the road where the country assumed a totally different character; the woods and moors were no longer visible, but a broad and somewhat bleak extent of country lay before them. Here and there only a few solitary trees broke the uniformity of the wide fields and scanty hedgerows, and at distant intervals the thin spires of the scattered churches rose like the prayers of which they were the symbols, to mingle themselves with heaven.

The gypsy paused: "I will accompany you," said he, "no farther; your way lies straight onwards, and you will reach W—— before noon. Farewell, and may God watch over you!"

"Farewell!" said the youth, warmly pressing the hand which was extended to him. "If we ever meet again, it will probably solve a curious riddle, — namely, whether *you* are not disgusted with the caravan, and *I* with the world!"

"The latter is more likely than the former," said the gypsy; "for one stands a much greater chance of being disgusted with others than with one's self; so, changing a little the old lines, I will wish you adieu after my own fashion, — namely, in verse: —

‘Go, set thy heart on wingèd wealth,
Or unto honor's towers aspire;
But give me freedom and my health,
And there's the sum of my desire!’”

CHAPTER IV.

The letter, Madam, — have you none for me?

The Rendezvous.

Provide surgeons. — *The Lover's Progress.*

OUR solitary traveller pursued his way with the light step and gay spirits of youth and health.

“Turn gypsy, indeed!” he said, talking to himself; “there is something better in store for me than that. Ay, I have all the world before me where to choose, — *not* my place of rest. No, many a long year will pass away ere any place of rest will be my choice! I wonder whether I shall find the letter at W——; *the* letter, the last letter I shall ever have from home: but it is no home to me now; and *I—I*, insulted, reviled, trampled upon, without even a name! Well, well, I will earn a still fairer one than that of my forefathers. They shall be proud to own me yet.” And with these words the speaker broke off abruptly, with a swelling chest and a flashing eye; and as, an unknown and friendless adventurer, he gazed on the expanded and silent country around him, he felt, like Castruccio Castrucani, that he could stretch his hands to the east and to the west, and exclaim, “Oh, that my power kept pace with my spirit, then should it grasp the corners of the earth.”

The road wound at last from the champaign country, through which it had for some miles extended itself, into a narrow lane, girded on either side by a dead fence. As the youth entered this lane, he was somewhat startled by the abrupt appearance of a horseman, whose steed leaped the hedge so close to our hero as almost to

endanger his safety. The rider, a gentleman of about five-and-twenty, pulled up, and, in a tone of great courtesy, apologized for his inadvertency; the apology was readily admitted, and the horseman rode onwards in the direction of W——.

Trifling as this incident was, the air and mien of the stranger were sufficient to arrest, irresistibly, the thoughts of the young traveller; and before they had flowed into a fresh channel he found himself in the town, and at the door of the inn to which his expedition was bound. He entered the bar; a buxom landlady and a still more buxom daughter were presiding over the spirits of the place.

"You have some boxes and a letter for me, I believe," said the young gentleman to the comely hostess.

"To *you*, sir! the name, if you please?"

"To — to — to C. L.," said the youth; "the initials C. L., to be left till called for."

"Yes, sir, we *have* some luggage, — came last night by the van, — and a letter besides, sir, to C. L. also."

The daughter lifted her large, dark eyes at the handsome stranger, and felt a wonderful curiosity to know what the letter to C. L. could possibly be about; meanwhile mine hostess, raising her hand to a shelf on which stood an Indian slop-basin, the great ornament of the bar at the Golden Fleece, brought from its cavity a well-folded and well-sealed epistle.

"That is it," cried the youth; "show me a private room instantly."

"What *can* he want a private room for?" thought the landlady's daughter.

"Show the gentleman to the Griffin, No. 4, John Merrylack," said the landlady herself.

With an impatient step the owner of the letter fol-

lowed a slip-shod and marvellously unwashed waiter into No. 4, — a small, square asylum for town travellers, country yeomen, and “single gentlemen;” presenting, on the one side, an admirable engraving of the Marquess of Granby, and on the other an equally delightful view of the stable-yard.

Mr. C. L. flung himself on a chair (there were only four chairs in No. 4), watched the waiter out of the room, seized his letter, broke open the seal, and read — yea, reader, *you* shall read it too — as follows: —

“Enclosed is the sum to which you are entitled; remember, that it is all which you can ever claim at my hands; remember also, that *you* have made the choice which, now, nothing can persuade me to alter. Be the name you have so long iniquitously borne henceforth and always forgotten; upon that condition you may yet hope, from my generosity, the future assistance which you *must* want, but which you could not ask from my affection. Equally, by my heart and my reason, you are forever *disowned*.”

The letter fell from the reader’s hands. He took up the enclosure; it was an order payable in London for £1000; to him it seemed like the rental of the Indies.

“Be it so!” he said aloud, and slowly, — “be it so! With this will I carve my way; many a name in history was built upon a worse foundation!”

With these words he carefully put up the money, re-read the brief note which enclosed it, tore the latter into pieces, and then, going towards the aforesaid view of the stable-yard, threw open the window and leaned out, apparently in earnest admiration of two pigs, which marched, gruntingly, towards him, one goat regaling himself upon a cabbage, and a broken-winded, emaciated horse, which having just been, what the hostler called,

"rubbed down," was just going to be, what the hostler called, "fed."

While engaged in this interesting survey, the clatter of hoofs was suddenly heard upon the rough pavement: a bell rang, a dog barked, the pigs grunted, the hostler ran out, and the stranger, whom our hero had before met on the road, trotted into the yard.

It was evident from the obsequiousness of the attendants, that the horseman was a personage of no mean importance; and indeed there was something singularly distinguished and high-bred in his air and carriage.

"Who can that be?" said the youth, as the horseman, having dismounted, turned towards the door of the inn: the question was readily answered, "There goes pride and poverty!" said the hostler. — "Here comes Squire Mordaunt!" said the landlady.

At the further end of the stable-yard, through a narrow gate, the youth caught a glimpse of the green sward and springing flowers of a small garden. Wearied with the sameness of No. 4, rather than with his journey, he sauntered towards the said gate, and, seating himself in a small arbor within the garden, surrendered himself to reflection.

The result of this self-conference was a determination to leave the Golden Fleece by the earliest conveyance which went to that great object and emporium of all his plans and thoughts, London. As, full of this resolution, and buried in the dreams which it conjured up, he was returning with downcast eyes and unheeding steps through the stable-yard, to the delights of No. 4, he was suddenly accosted by a loud and alarmed voice, —

"For God's sake, sir, look out, or —"

The sentence was broken off, the intended warning came too late, our hero staggered back a few steps, and

fell, stunned and motionless, against the stable-door. Unconsciously he had passed just behind the heels of the stranger's horse, which, being by no means in good humor with the clumsy manœuvres of his *shampooer*, the hostler, had taken advantage of the opportunity presented to him of working off his irritability, and had consequently inflicted a severe kick upon the right shoulder of Mr. C. L.

The stranger, honored by the landlady with the name and title of Squire Mordaunt, was in the yard at the moment. He hastened towards the sufferer, who as yet was scarcely sensible, and led him into the house. The surgeon of the village was sent for, and appeared. This disciple of Galen, commonly known by the name of Jeremiah Bossolton, was a gentleman considerably more inclined to breadth than length. He was exactly five feet one inch in height, but thick and solid as a milestone; a wig of modern cut, carefully curled and powdered, gave somewhat of a modish, and therefore unseemly grace to a solemn eye; a mouth drawn down at the corners; a nose that had something in it exceedingly consequential; eyebrows sage and shaggy; ears large and fiery; and a chin that would have done honor to a mandarin. Now, Mr. Jeremiah Bossolton had a certain peculiarity of speech to which I fear I shall find it difficult to do justice. Nature had impressed upon his mind a prodigious love of the grandiloquent; Mr. Bossolton, therefore, disdained the exact language of the vulgar, and built unto himself a lofty fabric of words in which his sense managed very frequently to lose itself. Moreover, upon beginning a sentence of peculiar dignity, Mr. Bossolton was, it must be confessed, sometimes at a loss to conclude it in a period worthy of the commencement; and this caprice of nature, which had endowed him with

more words than thoughts (necessity is, indeed, the mother of invention), drove him into a very ingenious method of remedying the deficiency: this was simply the plan of repeating the sense by inverting the sentence.

"How long a period of time," said Mr. Bossolton, "has elapsed since this deeply-to-be-regretted and seriously-to-be-investigated accident occurred?"

"Not many minutes," said Mr. Mordaunt: "make no further delay, I beseech you, but examine the arm; it is not broken, I trust?"

"In this world, Mr. Mordaunt," said the practitioner, bowing very low, for the person he addressed was of the most ancient lineage in the county, — "in this world, Mr. Mordaunt, even at the earliest period of civilization, delay in matters of judgment has ever been considered of such vital importance, and — and such important vitality, that we find it inculcated in the proverbs of the Greeks, and the sayings of the Chaldeans, as a principle of the most expedient utility, and — and — the most useful expediency!"

"Mr. Bossolton," said Mordaunt, in a tone of remarkable and even artificial softness and civility, "have the kindness *immediately* to examine this gentleman's bruises."

Mr. Bossolton looked up to the calm but haughty face of the speaker, and, without a moment's hesitation, proceeded to handle the arm which was already stripped for his survey.

"It frequently occurs," said Mr. Bossolton, "in the course of my profession, that the forcible, sudden, and vehement application of any hard substance, like the hoof of a quadruped, to the soft, tender, and carniferous parts of the human frame, such as the arm, occasions a pain, a pang, I should rather say, of the intensest acuteness, and — and of the acutest intensity."

"Pray, Mr. Bossolton, is the bone broken?" asked Mordaunt.

By this time the patient, who had been hitherto in that languor which extreme pain always produces at first, especially on young frames, was sufficiently recovered to mark and reply to the kind solicitude of the last speaker: "I thank you, sir," said he, with a smile, "for your anxiety, but I feel that the bone is *not* broken, the muscles are a little hurt, — that is all."

"Young gentleman," said Mr. Bossolton, "you must permit me to say that they who have all their lives been employed in the pursuit and the investigation, and the analysis of certain studies, are, in general, better acquainted with those studies than they who have neither given them any importance of consideration, nor — nor any consideration of importance. Establishing this as my hypothesis, I shall now proceed to —"

"Apply immediate remedies, if you please, Mr. Bossolton," interrupted Mr. Mordaunt, in that sweet and honeyed tone which somehow or other always silenced even the garrulous practitioner.

Driven into taciturnity, Mr. Bossolton again inspected the arm, and proceeded to urge the application of liniments and bandages, which he promised to prepare with the most solicitudinous despatch and the most despatchful solicitude.

CHAPTER V.

Your name, sir !

Ha ! my name, you say, — my name ?

'Tis well ; my name — is — nay, I must consider.

Pedrillo.

THIS accident occasioned a delay of some days in the plans of the young gentleman, for whom we trust, very soon, both for our own convenience and that of our reader, to find a fitting appellation.

Mr. Mordaunt, after seeing every attention paid to him, both surgical and hospitable, took his departure with a promise to call the next day, leaving behind him a strong impression of curiosity and interest to serve our hero as some mental occupation until his return. The bonny landlady came up in a new cap, with blue ribbons, in the course of the evening, to pay a visit of inquiry to the handsome patient, who was removed from the Griffin, No. 4, to the Dragon, No. 8: a room whose merits were exactly in proportion to its number, — namely, twice as great as those of No. 4.

" Well, sir," said Mrs. Taptape, with a courtesy, " I trust you find yourself better."

" At *this* moment I do," said the gallant youth, with a significant air.

" Hem ! " quoth the landlady.

A pause ensued. In spite of the compliment, a certain suspicion suddenly darted across the mind of the hostess. Strong as are the prepossessions of the sex, those of the profession are much stronger.

"Honest folk," thought the landlady, "don't travel with their initials only; the last 'Whitehall Evening' was full of shocking accounts of swindlers and cheats; and I gave nine pounds odd shillings for the silver teapot John has brought him up,—as if the delf one was not good enough for a foot traveller."

Pursuing these ideas, Mrs. Taptape, looking bashfully down, said, —

"By the by, sir, Mr. Bossolton asked me what name he should put down in his book for the medicines: what would you please me to say, sir?"

"Mr. who?" said the youth, elevating his eyebrows.

"Mr. Bossolton, sir, the apothecary."

"Oh, Bossolton! very odd name that: not near so pretty as—dear me what a beautiful cap that is of yours!" said the young gentleman.

"Lord, sir, do you think so? The ribbon *is* pretty enough; but — but, as I was saying, what name shall I tell Mr. Bossolton to put in his book?" This, thought Mrs. Taptape, is coming to the point.

"Well!" said the youth, slowly, and as if in a profound reverie, — "well, Bossolton is certainly the most singular name I ever heard; he does right to put it in a book, — it is quite a curiosity! Is he clever?"

"Very, sir," said the landlady, somewhat sharply; "but it is *your* name, not *his*, that he wishes to put into his book."

"Mine!" said the youth, who appeared to have been seeking to gain time in order to answer a query which most men find requires very little deliberation, — "mine, you say; *my* name is Linden, Clarence Linden, — you understand?"

"What a pretty name!" thought the landlady's

daughter, who was listening at the keyhole; "but how *could* he admire that odious cap of Ma's!"

"And now, landlady, I wish you would send up my boxes; and get me a newspaper, if you please."

"Yes, sir," said the landlady, and she rose to retire.

"I do not think," said the youth to himself, "that I could have hit on a prettier name, — and so novel a one too! Clarence Linden, — why, if I were that pretty girl at the bar, I could fall in love with the very words. Shakespeare was quite wrong when he said, —

'A rose by any other name would smell as sweet.

A rose by *any* name would not smell as sweet; if a rose's name was Jeremiah Bossolton, for instance, it would not, to my nerves, at least, smell of anything but an apothecary's shop!"

When Mordaunt called the next morning, he found Clarence much better, and carelessly turning over various books, part of the contents of the luggage superscribed C. L. A book of whatever description was among the few companions for whom Mordaunt had neither fastidiousness nor reserve; and the sympathy of taste between him and the sufferer gave rise to a conversation less cold and commonplace than it might otherwise have been. And when Mordaunt, after a stay of some length, rose to depart, he pressed Linden to return his visit before he left that part of the country; his place, he added, was only about five miles distant from W—. Linden, greatly interested in his visitor, was not slow in accepting the invitation; and, perhaps for the first time in his life, Mordaunt was shaking hands with a stranger he had only known two days.

CHAPTER VI.

While yet a child, and long before his time,
He had perceived the presence and the power
Of greatness.

But eagerly he read, and read again.

Yet still uppermost
Nature was at his heart, as if he felt,
Though yet he knew not how, a wasting power
In all things that from her sweet influence
Might seek to wean him. Therefore with her hues,
Her forms, and with the spirit of her forms,
He clothed the nakedness of austere truth.

WORDSWORTH.

ALGERNON MORDAUNT was the last son of an old and honorable race, which had, centuries back, numbered princes in its line. His parents had had many children, but all (save Algernon, the youngest) died in their infancy. His mother perished in giving him birth. Constitutional infirmity, and the care of mercenary nurses, contributed to render Algernon a weakly and delicate child: hence came a taste for loneliness and a passion for study; and from these sprang, on the one hand, the fastidiousness and reserve which render us apparently unamiable, and, on the other, the loftiness of spirit and the kindness of heart, which are the best and earliest gifts of literature, and more than counterbalance our deficiencies in the "minor morals" due to society by their tendency to increase our attention to the greater ones belonging to mankind. Mr. Mordaunt was a man

of luxurious habits and gambling propensities. Wedded to London, he left the house of his ancestors to moulder into desertion and decay; but to this home Algernon was constantly consigned during his vacations from school; and its solitude and cheerlessness gave to a disposition naturally melancholy and thoughtful, those colors which subsequent events were calculated to deepen, not efface.

Truth obliges us to state, despite our partiality to Mordaunt, that when he left his school, after a residence of six years, it was with the bitter distinction of having been the most unpopular boy in it. Why, nobody could exactly explain, for his severest enemies could not accuse him of ill-nature, cowardice, or avarice, and these make the three capital offences of a schoolboy; but Algernon Mordaunt had already acquired the knowledge of himself, and could explain the cause, though with a bitter and swelling heart. His ill health, his long residence at home, his unfriended and almost orphan situation, his early habits of solitude and reserve,—all these, so calculated to make the spirit shrink within itself, made him, on his entrance at school, if not unsocial, *appear* so. This was the primary reason of his unpopularity; the second was that he perceived, for he was sensitive (and consequently acute) to the extreme, the misfortune of his manner, and in his wish to rectify it, it became doubly unprepossessing; to reserve, it now added embarrassment, — to coldness gloom; and the pain he felt in addressing or being addressed by another, was naturally and necessarily reciprocal, for the effects of sympathy are nowhere so wonderful, yet so invisible, as in the manners.

By degrees he shunned the intercourse which had for him nothing but distress, and his volatile acquaintances

were perhaps the first to set him the example. Often in his solitary walks he stopped afar off to gaze upon the sports, which none ever solicited him to share; and as the shout of laughter and of happy hearts came, peal after peal, upon his ear, he turned enviously, yet not malignantly away with tears, which not all his pride could curb, and muttered to himself, "And these, these hate me!"

There are two feelings common to all high or affectionate natures: that of extreme susceptibility to opinion, and that of extreme bitterness at its injustice. These feelings were Mordaunt's; but the keen edge which one blow injures, the repetition blunts; and, by little and little, Algernon became not only accustomed, but, as he persuaded himself, indifferent to his want of popularity. His step grew more lofty, and his address more collected, and that which was once diffidence gradually hardened into pride.

His residence at the university was neither without honor nor profit. A college life was then, as now, either the most retired or the most social of all others: we need scarcely say which it was to Mordaunt; but his was the age when solitude is desirable, and when the closet forms the mind better than the world. Driven upon itself, his intellect became inquiring, and its resources profound; admitted to their inmost recesses, he revelled among the treasures of ancient lore, and in his dreams of the Nymph and Naiad, or his researches after truth in the deep wells of the Stagyrte or the golden fountains of Plato, he forgot the loneliness of his lot, and exhausted the hoarded enthusiasm of his soul.

But his mind, rather thoughtful than imaginative, found no idol like "Divine Philosophy." It delighted to plunge itself into the mazes of metaphysical investi-

gation, to trace the springs of the intellect, to connect the arcana of the universe, to descend into the darkest caverns, or to wind through the minutest mysteries of nature, and rise, step by step, to that arduous elevation on which thought stands dizzy and confused, looking beneath upon a clouded earth, and above, upon an unfathomable heaven.

Rarely wandering from his chamber, known personally to few, and intimately by none, Algernon yet left behind him at the university the most remarkable reputation of his day. He had obtained some of the highest of academical honors, and, by that proverbial process of vulgar minds which ever frames the magnificent from the unknown, — the seclusion in which he lived, and the recondite nature of his favorite pursuits, attached to his name a still greater celebrity and interest than all the orthodox and regular dignities he had acquired. There are few men who do not console themselves for not being generally loved, if they can reasonably hope that they are generally esteemed. Mordaunt had now grown reconciled to himself and to his kind. He had opened to his interest a world in his own breast, and it consoled him for his mortification in the world without. But, better than this, his habits as well as studies had strengthened the principles and confirmed the nobility of his mind. He was not, it is true, more kind, more benevolent, more upright than before; but those virtues now emanated from principle, not emotion: and principle to the mind is what a free constitution is to a people; without that principle, or that free constitution, the one may be for the moment as good, the other as happy, but we cannot tell how long the goodness and the happiness will continue.

On leaving the university, his father sent for him to

London. He stayed there a short time, and mingled partially in its festivities; but the pleasures of English dissipation have for a century been the same, heartless without gayety, and dull without refinement. Nor could Mordaunt, the most fastidious yet warm-hearted of human beings, reconcile either his tastes or his affections to the cold insipidities of patrician society. His father's habits and evident distresses deepened his disgust to his situation; for the habits were incurable, and the distresses increasing, and nothing but a circumstance, which Mordaunt did not then understand, prevented the final sale of an estate, already little better than a pious encumbrance.

It was, therefore, with the half-painful, half-pleasurable sensation, with which we avoid contemplating a ruin we cannot prevent, that Mordaunt set out upon that Continental tour deemed then so necessary a part of education. His father, on taking leave of him, seemed deeply affected. "Go, my son," said he; "may God bless you, and not punish me too severely. I have wronged you deeply, and I cannot bear to look upon your face."

To these words Algernon attached a general, but they cloaked a peculiar meaning; in three years he returned to England, — his father had been dead some months, and the signification of his parting address was already deciphered; but of this hereafter.

In his travels, Mordaunt encountered an Englishman, whose name I will not yet mention, a person of great reputed wealth, a merchant, yet a man of pleasure, a voluptuary in life, yet a saint in reputation, — or, to abstain from the antithetical analysis of a character, which will not be corporeally presented to the reader, till our tale is considerably advanced, — one who drew from nature a singular combination of shrewd but false

conclusions, and a peculiar philosophy, destined hereafter to contrast the colors, and prove the practical utility of that which was espoused by Mordaunt.

There can be no education in which the lessons of the world do not form a share. Experience, in expanding Algernon's powers, had ripened his virtues. Nor had the years which had converted knowledge into wisdom failed in imparting polish to refinement. His person had acquired a greater grace, and his manners an easier dignity than before. His noble and generous mind had worked its impress upon his features, and his mien; and those who could overcome the first coldness and shrinking *hauteur* of his address, found it required no minute examination to discover the real expression of the eloquent eye and the kindling lip.

He had not been long returned, before he found two enemies to his tranquillity,—the one was love, the other appeared in the more formidable guise of a claimant to his estate. Before Algernon was aware of the nature of the latter, he went to consult with his lawyer.

"If the claim be just, I shall not, of course, proceed to law," said Mordaunt.

"But without the estate, sir, you have nothing!"

"True," said Algernon, calmly.

But the claim was not just, and to law he went.

In this lawsuit, however, he had one assistant in an old relation who had seen, indeed, but very little of him, but who compassionated his circumstances, and, above all, hated his opponent. This relation was rich and childless; and there were not wanting those who predicted that his money would ultimately discharge the mortgages and repair the house of the young representative of the Mordaunt honors. But the old kinsman was obstinate, self-willed, and under the absolute dominion

of patrician pride; and it was by no means improbable that the independence of Mordaunt's character would soon create a disunion between them, by clashing against the peculiarities of his relation's temper.

It was a clear and sunny morning when Linden, tolerably recovered of his hurt, set out upon a sober and aged pony, which, after some natural pangs of shame, he had hired of his landlord, to Mordaunt Court.

Mordaunt's house was situated in the midst of a wild and extensive park, surrounded with woods, and interspersed with trees of the stateliest growth, now scattered into irregular groups, now marshalled into sweeping avenues; while, ever and anon, Linden caught glimpses of a rapid and brawling rivulet, which, in many a slight but sounding waterfall, gave a music strange and spirit-like to the thick copses and forest glades through which it went exulting on its way. The deer lay half concealed by the fern among which they couched, turning their stately crests towards the stranger, but not stirring from their rest; while from the summit of beeches, which would have shamed the pavilion of Tityrus, the rooks — those monks of the feathered people — were loud in their confused, but not displeasing, confabulations.

As Linden approached the house, he was struck with the melancholy air of desolation which spread over and around it: fragments of stone, above which climbed the rank weed, insolently proclaiming the triumph of nature's meanest offspring over the wrecks of art; a moat dried up; a railing, once of massy gilding, intended to fence a lofty terrace on the right from the incursions of the deer, but which, shattered and decayed, now seemed to ask, with the satirist, —

“To what end did our lavish ancestors
Erect of old these stately piles of ours?”

— a chapel on the left, perfectly in ruins, — all appeared strikingly to denote that time had outstripped fortune, and that the years, which alike hallow and destroy, had broken the consequence, in deepening the antiquity of the House of Mordaunt.

The building itself agreed but too well with the tokens of decay around it: most of the windows were shut up, and the shutters of dark oak, richly gilt, contrasted forcibly with the shattered panes and mouldered framing of the glass. It was a house of irregular architecture. Originally built in the fifteenth century, it had received its last improvement, with the most lavish expense, during the reign of Anne; and it united the Gallic magnificence of the latter period with the strength and grandeur of the former. It was in a great part overgrown with ivy, and, where that insidious ornament had not reached, the signs of decay, and even ruin, were fully visible. The sun itself, bright and cheering as it shone over nature, making the green sod glow like emeralds, and the rivulet flash in its beam, like one of those streams of real light imagined by Swedenborg in his visions of heaven, and clothing tree and fell, brake and hillock, with the lavish hues of infant summer, — the sun itself only made more desolate, because more conspicuous, the venerable fabric, which the youthful traveller frequently paused more accurately to survey; and its laughing and sportive beams, playing over chink and crevice, seemed almost as insolent and untimeous as the mirth of the young, mocking the silent grief of some gray-headed and solitary mourner.

Clarence had now reached the porch, and the sound of the shrill bell he touched rang with a strange note through the general stillness of the place. A single

servant appeared, and ushered Clarence through a screen hall, hung round with relics of armor, and ornamented on the side opposite the music gallery with a solitary picture of gigantic size, exhibiting the full length of the gaunt person and sable steed of that Sir Piers de Mordaunt who had so signalized himself in the field in which Henry of Richmond changed his coronet for a crown. Through this hall Clarence was led to a small chamber clothed with uncouth and tattered arras, in which, seemingly immersed in papers, he found the owner of the domain.

"Your studies," said Linden, after the salutations of the day, "seem to harmonize with the venerable antiquity of your home;" and he pointed to the crabbed characters and faded ink of the papers on the table.

"So they ought," answered Mordaunt, with a faint smile; "for they are called from their quiet archives in order to support my struggle for that home. But I fear the struggle is in vain, and that the quibbles of law will transfer into other hands a possession I am foolish enough to value the more from my inability to maintain it."

Something of this Clarence had before learned from the communicative gossip of his landlady; and, less desirous to satisfy his curiosity than to lead the conversation from a topic which he felt must be so unwelcome to Mordaunt, he expressed a wish to see the state apartments of the house. With something of shame at the neglect they had necessarily experienced, and something of pride at the splendor which no neglect could efface, Mordaunt yielded to the request, and led the way up a staircase of black oak, the walls and ceiling of which were covered with frescos of Italian art, to a suite of apartments in which time and dust seemed

the only tenants. Lingeringly did Clarence gaze upon the rich velvet, the costly mirrors, the motley paintings of a hundred ancestors, and the antique cabinets, containing, among the most hoarded relics of the Mordaunt race, curiosities which the hereditary enthusiasm of a line of cavaliers had treasured as the most sacred of heirlooms, and which, even to the philosophical mind of Mordaunt, possessed a value he did not seek too minutely to analyze. Here was the goblet from which the first prince of Tudor had drunk after the field of Bosworth. Here the ring with which the chivalrous Francis I. had rewarded a signal feat of that famous Robert de Mordaunt, who, as a poor but adventurous cadet of the house, had brought to the "first gentleman of France" the assistance of his sword. Here was the glove which Sir Walter had received from the royal hand of Elizabeth, and worn in the lists upon a crest which the lance of no antagonist in that knightly court could abase. And here, more sacred than all, because connected with the memory of misfortune, was a small box of silver, which the last king of a fated line had placed in the hand of the gray-headed descendant of that Sir Walter after the battle of the Boyne, saying, "Keep this, Sir Everard Mordaunt, for the sake of one who has purchased the luxury of gratitude at the price of a throne!"

As Clarence glanced from these relics to the figure of Mordaunt, who stood at a little distance leaning against the window, with arms folded on his breast, and with eyes abstractedly wandering over the noble woods and extended park which spread below, he could not but feel that if birth had indeed the power of setting its seal upon the form, it was never more conspicuous than in the broad front and lofty air of the last descendant

of the race by whose memorials he was surrounded. Touched by the fallen fortunes of Mordaunt, and interested by the uncertainty which the chances of law threw over his future fate, Clarence could not resist exclaiming, with some warmth and abruptness, —

“And by what subterfuge, or cavil, does the present claimant of these estates hope to dislodge their rightful possessor?”

“Why,” answered Mordaunt, “it is a long story in detail, but briefly told in epitome. My father was a man whose habits greatly exceeded his fortune, and a few months after his death, Mr. Vavasour, a distant relation, produced a paper, by which it appeared that my father had, for a certain sum of ready money, disposed of his estates to this Mr. Vavasour, upon condition that they should not be claimed, nor the treaty divulged, till after his death; the reason for this proviso seems to have been the shame my father felt for his exchange, and his fear of the censures of that world to which he was always devoted.”

“But how unjust to you!” said Clarence.

“Not so much as it seems,” said Mordaunt, deprecatingly; “for I was then but a sickly boy, and, according to the physicians, and I sincerely believe according also to my poor father’s belief, almost certain of a premature death. In that case Vavasour would have been the nearest heir; and this expectancy, by the by, joined to the mortgages on the property, made the sum given ridiculously disproportioned to the value of the estate. I must confess that the news came upon me like a thunderbolt. I should have yielded up possession immediately, but was informed by my lawyers that my father had no legal right to dispose of the property; the discussion of that right forms the ground of the present

lawsuit. But," continued Mordaunt, proudly, yet mournfully, "I am prepared for the worst; if, indeed, I should call that the worst which can affect neither intellect, nor health, nor character, nor conscience."

Clarence was silent, and Mordaunt, after a brief pause, once more resumed his guidance. Their tour ended in a large library filled with books, and this, Mordaunt informed his guest, was his chosen sitting-room.

An old carved table was covered with works which for the most part possessed for the young mind of Clarence, more accustomed to imagine than reflect, but a very feeble attraction; on looking over them, he, however, found, half hid by a huge folio of Hobbes, and another of Locke, a volume of Milton's poems: this paved the way to a conversation, in which both had an equal interest; for both were enthusiastic in the character and genius of that wonderful man, for whom "the divine and solemn countenance of Freedom" was dearer than the light of day, and whose solitary spell, accomplishing what the whole family of earth once vainly began upon the plain of Shinar, has built of materials more imperishable than "slime and brick," "a city and a tower whose summit has reached to heaven."

It was with mutual satisfaction that Mordaunt and his guest continued their commune till the hour of dinner was announced to them by a bell, which, formerly intended as an alarm, now served the peaceful purpose of a more agreeable summons.

The same servant who had admitted Clarence ushered them through the great hall into the dining-room, and was their solitary attendant during their repast.

The temper of Mordaunt was essentially grave and earnest, and his conversation almost invariably took the tone of his mind; this made their conference turn upon

less minute and commonplace topics than one between such new acquaintances, especially of different ages, usually does.

"You will positively go to London to-morrow, then?" said Mordaunt, as the servant, removing the appurtenances of dinner, left them alone.

"Positively," answered Clarence. "I go there to carve my own fortunes, and, to say truth, I am impatient to begin."

Mordaunt looked earnestly at the frank face of the speaker, and wondered that one so young, so well educated, and, from his air and manner, evidently of gentle blood, should appear so utterly thrown upon his own resources.

"I wish you success," said he, after a pause; "and it is a noble part of the organization of this world, that by increasing those riches which are beyond fortune, we do in general take the surest method of obtaining those which are in its reach."

Clarence looked inquiringly at Mordaunt, who, perceiving it, continued, "I see that I should explain myself further. I will do so by using the thoughts of a mind not the least beautiful and accomplished which this country has produced. 'Of all which belongs to us,' said Bolingbroke, 'the least valuable parts can alone fall under the will of others. *Whatever is best is safest*, lies out of the reach of human power, can neither be given nor taken away. Such is this great and beautiful work of nature, the world. Such is the mind of man, which contemplates and admires the world whereof it makes the noblest part. These are inseparably ours, and as long as we remain in one we shall enjoy the other.'"

"Beautiful, indeed!" exclaimed Clarence, with the

enthusiasm of a young and pure heart, to which every loftier sentiment is always beautiful.

"And true as beautiful!" said Mordaunt. "Nor is this all, for the mind can even dispense with that world, 'of which it forms a part,' if we can create within it a world still more inaccessible to chance. But (and I now return to and explain my former observation) the means by which we can effect this *peculiar* world, can be rendered equally subservient to our advancement and prosperity in that which we share in common with our race; for the riches, which by the aid of wisdom we heap up in the storehouses of the mind, are, though not the only, the most customary coin by which external prosperity is bought. So that the philosophy which can alone give independence to ourselves, becomes, under the name of honesty, the best policy in commerce with our kind."

In conversation of this nature, which the sincerity and lofty enthusiasm of Mordaunt rendered interesting to Clarence, despite the distaste to the serious so ordinary to youth, the hours passed on, till the increasing evening warned Linden to depart.

"Adieu!" said he to Mordaunt. "I know not when we shall meet again, but if we ever do, I will make it my boast, whether in prosperity or misfortune, not to have forgotten the pleasure I have this day enjoyed!"

Returning his guest's farewell with a warmth unusual to his manner, Mordaunt followed him to the door, and saw him depart.

Fate ordained that they should pursue, in very different paths, their several destinies; nor did it afford them an opportunity of meeting again, till years and events had severely tried the virtue of one, and materially altered the prospects of the other.

The next morning Clarence Linden was on his road to London.

CHAPTER VII.

"Upon my word," cries Jones, "thou art a very odd fellow, and I like thy humor extremely."—FIELDING.

THE rumbling and jolting vehicle which conveyed Clarence to the metropolis stopped at the door of a tavern in Holborn. Linden was ushered into a close coffee-room and presented with a bill of fare. While he was deliberating between the respective merits of mutton-chops and beefsteaks, a man with a brown coat, brown breeches, and a brown wig, walked into the room; he cast a curious glance at Clarence, and then turned to the waiter.

"A pair of slippers!"

"Yes, sir;" and the waiter disappeared.

"I suppose," said the brown gentleman to Clarence, —
"I suppose, sir, you are the gentleman just come to town?"

"You are right, sir," said Clarence.

"Very well, — very well, indeed," resumed the stranger, musingly. "I took the liberty of looking at your boxes in the passage; I knew a lady, sir, a relation of yours, I think."

"Sir!" exclaimed Linden, coloring violently.

"At least, I suppose, for her name was just the same as yours, only, at least, one letter difference between them: yours is *Linden*, I see, sir; hers was *Minden*. Am I right in my conjecture, that you are related to her?"

"Sir," answered Clarence, gravely, "notwithstanding the similarity of our names, we are not related."

"Very extraordinary," replied the stranger.

"Very," repeated Linden.

"I had the honor, sir," said the brown gentleman, "to make Mrs. Minden many presents of value, and I should have been very happy to have obliged you in the same manner, had you been any way connected with that worthy gentlewoman."

"You are very kind," said Linden, — "you are very kind; and since such were your intentions, I believe I *must* have been connected with Mrs. Minden. At all events, as you justly observe, there is only the difference of a letter between our names: a discrepancy too slight, I am sure, to alter your benevolent intentions."

Here the waiter returned with the slippers.

The stranger slowly unbuttoned his gaiters. "Sir," said he to Linden, "we will renew our conversation presently."

No sooner had the generous friend of Mrs. Minden deposited his feet into their easy tenements than he quitted the room.

"Pray," said Linden to the waiter, when he had ordered his simple repast, "who is that gentleman in brown?"

"Mr. Brown," replied the waiter.

"And who, or what is Mr. Brown?" asked our hero.

Before the waiter could reply, Mr. Brown returned with a large bandbox, carefully enveloped in a blue handkerchief. "You come from —, sir?" said Mr. Brown, quietly seating himself at the same table as Linden.

"No, sir, I do not."

"From —, then?"

"No, sir! — from W——."

"W——! ay — well, I know a lady with a name very like W—— (the late Lady Waddilove) extremely well. I made her some valuable presents, — her ladyship was very sensible of it."

"I don't doubt it, sir," replied Clarence; "such instances of general beneficence rarely occur!"

"I have some magnificent relics of her ladyship in this box," returned Mr. Brown.

"Really! then she was no less generous than yourself, I presume!"

"Yes, her ladyship *was* remarkably generous. About a week before she died (the late Lady Waddilove was quite sensible of her danger) she called me to her: 'Brown,' said she, 'you are a good creature; I have had my most valuable things from you. I am not ungrateful; I will leave you — *my maid*! She is as clever as you are, and as good.' I took the hint, sir, and married. It was an excellent bargain. My wife is a charming woman; she entirely fitted up Mrs. Minden's wardrobe, and I furnished the house. Mrs. Minden was greatly indebted to us."

"Heaven help me!" thought Clarence, "the man is certainly mad."

The waiter entered with the dinner; and Mr. Brown, who seemed to have a delicate aversion to any conversation in the presence of the Ganymede of the Holborn tavern, immediately ceased his communications: meanwhile Clarence took the opportunity to survey him more minutely than he had hitherto done.

His new acquaintance was in age about forty-eight; in stature, rather under the middle height; and thin, dried, withered, yet muscular withal, like a man who, in stinting his stomach for the sake of economy, does not the less enjoy the power of undergoing any fatigue or exer-

tion that an object of adequate importance may demand. We have said already that he was attired, like twilight, "in a suit of sober brown;" and there was a formality, a precision, and a cat-like sort of cleanliness in his garb which savored strongly of the respectable coxcombry of the counting-house. His face was lean, it is true, but not emaciated; and his complexion, sallow and adust, harmonized well with the colors of his clothing. An eye of the darkest hazel, sharp, shrewd, and flashing at times, especially at the mention of the euphonious name of Lady Waddilove, — a name frequently upon the lips of the inheritor of her Abigail, — with a fire that might be called brilliant, was of that modest species which can seldom encounter the straightforward glance of another; on the contrary, it seemed restlessly uneasy in any settled place, and wandered from ceiling to floor, and corner to corner, with an inquisitive, though apparently careless glance, as if seeking for something to admire or haply to appropriate; it also seemed to be the especial care of Mr. Brown to veil, as far as he was able, the vivacity of his looks beneath an expression of open and unheeding good-nature, an expression strangely enough contrasting with the closeness and sagacity which nature had indelibly stamped upon features pointed, aquiline, and impressed with a strong mixture of the Judaical physiognomy. The manner and bearing of this gentleman partook of the same undecided character as his countenance: they seemed to be struggling between civility and importance; a real eagerness to make the acquaintance of the person he addressed, and an assumed recklessness of the advantages which that acquaintance could bestow. It was like the behavior of a man who is desirous of having the best possible motives imputed to him, but is fearful lest that desire should not be utterly fulfilled.

At the first glance you would have pledged yourself for his respectability; at the second, you would have half suspected him to be a rogue; and, after you had been half an hour in his company, you would confess yourself in the obscurest doubt which was the better guess, the first or the last.

"Waiter!" said Mr. Brown, looking enviously at the viands upon which Linden, having satisfied his curiosity, was now, with all the appetite of youth, regaling himself, — "waiter!"

"Yes, sir!"

"Bring me a sandwich, and — and, waiter, see that I have plenty of — plenty of —"

"What, sir?"

"Plenty of mustard, waiter."

"Mustard" (and here Mr. Brown addressed himself to Clarence) "is a very wonderful assistance to the digestion. By the by, sir, if you want any curiously fine mustard, I can procure you some pots quite capital: a great favor, though — they were smuggled from France especially for the use of the late Lady Waddilove."

"Thank you," said Linden, dryly; "I shall be very happy to accept anything you may wish to offer me."

Mr. Brown took a pocketbook from his pouch. "Six pots of mustard, sir, — shall I say six?"

"As many as you please," replied Clarence; and Mr. Brown wrote down "Six pots of French mustard."

"You are a very young gentleman, sir," said Mr. Brown, "probably intended for some profession, — I don't mean to be impertinent, but if I can be of any assistance —"

"You can, sir," replied Linden, "and immediately, — have the kindness to ring the bell."

Mr. Brown, with a grave smile, did as he was desired;

the waiter re-entering, and receiving a whispered order from Clarence, again disappeared.

"What profession did you say, sir?" renewed Mr. Brown, artfully.

"None!" replied Linden.

"Oh, very well, very well indeed. Then as an idle, independent gentleman, you will of course be a bit of a beau: want some shirts, possibly; fine cravats, too,—gentlemen wear a particular pattern now: gloves, gold, or shall I say *gilt* chain, watch and seals, a ring or two, and a snuff-box?"

"Sir, you are vastly obliging," said Clarence, in undisguised surprise.

"Not at all, I would do anything for a relation of Mrs. Minden." The waiter re-entered: "Sir," said he to Linden, "your room is quite ready."

"I am glad to hear it," said Clarence, rising. "Mr. Brown, I have the honor of wishing you a good evening."

"Stay, sir,—stay; you have not looked into these things belonging to the late Lady Waddilove."

"Another time," said Clarence, hastily.

"To-morrow at ten o'clock," muttered Mr. Brown.

"I am exceedingly glad I have got rid of that fellow," said Linden to himself, as he stretched his limbs in his easy-chair, and drank off the last glass of his pint of port. "If I have not already seen, I have already guessed enough of the world, to know that you are to look to your pockets when a man offers you a present; they who 'give,' also 'take away.' So here I am in London, with an order for £1000 in my purse, the wisdom of Dr. Lattinas in my head, and the health of eighteen in my veins; will it not be my own fault if I do not both *enjoy* and *make* myself —"

And then, yielding to meditations of future success, partaking strongly of the inexperienced and sanguine temperament of the soliloquist, Clarence passed the hours, till his pillow summoned him to dreams no less ardent and perhaps no less unreal.

CHAPTER VIII.

Oh! how I long to be employed. — *Every Man in his Humor.*

CLARENCE was sitting the next morning over the very unsatisfactory breakfast which tea made out of broomsticks, and cream out of chalk (adulteration thrived even in 17—), afforded, when the waiter threw open the door, and announced Mr. Brown.

"Just in time, sir, you perceive," said Mr. Brown; "I am punctuality itself; exactly a quarter of a minute to ten. I have brought you the pots of French mustard, and I have some very valuable articles, which you *must* want besides."

"Thank you, sir," said Linden, not well knowing what to say; and Mr. Brown, untying a silk handkerchief, produced three shirts, two pots of pomatum, a tobacco-canister, with a German pipe, four pair of silk stockings, two gold seals, three rings, and a stuffed parrot!

"Beautiful articles these, sir," said Mr. Brown, with a snuffle "of inward sweetness long drawn out," and expressive of great admiration of his offered treasures,—"beautiful articles, sir, are n't they?"

"Very; the parrot in particular," said Clarence.

"Yes, sir," returned Mr. Brown; "the parrot is indeed quite a jewel; it belonged to the late Lady Waddilove; I offer it to you with considerable regret, for —"

"Oh!" interrupted Clarence, "pray do not rob yourself of such a jewel, it really is of no use to me."

"I know that, sir,—I know that," replied Mr. Brown; "but it will be of use to your friends; it will be inestimable to any old aunt, sir, any maiden lady living at Hackney, any curious elderly gentleman fond of a knick-nack. I knew you would know some one to send it to as a present, even though you should not want it yourself."

"Bless me!" thought Linden, "was there ever such generosity? Not content with providing for my wants, he extends his liberality even to any possible relations I may possess!"

Mr. Brown now retied "the beautiful articles" in his handkerchief. "Shall I leave them, sir?" said he.

"Why, really," said Clarence, "I thought yesterday that you were in jest; but you must be aware that I cannot accept presents from any gentleman so much—so much a stranger to me as you are."

"No, sir, I *am* aware of that," replied Mr. Brown; "and in order to remove the unpleasantness of such a feeling, sir, on your part,—merely in order to do that, I assure you with no other view, sir, in the world,—I have just noted down the articles on this piece of paper; but, as you will perceive, at a price so low as still to make them actually presents in every thing but the name. Oh, sir, I perfectly understand your delicacy, and would not for the world violate it."

So saying, Mr. Brown put a paper into Linden's hands, the substance of which a very little more experience of the world would have enabled Clarence to foresee; it ran thus:—

CLARENCE LINDEN, Esq., Dr.

To MR. MORRIS BROWN.

To Six Pots of French Mustard	£1 4 0
To Three Superfine Holland Shirts, with Cambric Bosoms, complete	4 1 0
To Two Pots of Superior French Pomatum	0 10 0
To a Tobacco-Canister of enamelled Tin, with a finely-executed head of the Pretender; slight flaw in the same	0 12 6
To a German Pipe, second-hand, as good as new, belonging to the late Lady Waddilove	1 18 0
To four pair of Black Silk Hose, ditto, belonging to her Ladyship's husband	2 8 0
To Two Superfine Embossed Gold Watch-seals, with a Classical Motto and device to each, — namely, Mouse-Trap and "Prenez Garde" to one, and "Who the devil can this be from?" ¹ to the other	1 1 0
To a remarkably fine Antique Ring, having the head of a Monkey	0 16 6
A ditto, with blue stones	0 12 6
A ditto, with green ditto	0 12 6
A Stuffed Green Parrot, a remarkable favorite of the late Lady W——	2 2 0
Sum Total	£15 18 0
Deduction for Ready Money	0 13 6
	£15 4 6
Mr. Brown's Profits for Brokerage	1 10 0
Sum Total	£16 14 6
Received of Clarence Linden Esq., this day of	17—.

It would have been no unamusing study to watch the expression of Clarence's face as it lengthened over each article until he had reached the final conclusion. He then carefully folded up the paper, restored it to Mr. Brown, with a low bow, and said, "Excuse me, sir, I will not take advantage of your generosity; keep your parrot and other treasures for some more worthy person.

¹ One would not have thought these ingenious devices had been of so ancient a date as the year 17—.

I cannot accept of what you are pleased to term your very valuable *presents* ! ”

“ Oh, very well, — very well,” said Mr. Brown, pocketing the paper, and seeming perfectly unconcerned at the termination of his proposals; “ perhaps I can serve you in some other way ? ”

“ In none, I thank you,” replied Linden.

“ Just consider, sir! — you will want lodgings: I can find them for you, cheaper than you can yourself; or perhaps you would prefer going into a nice, quiet, genteel family, where you can have both board and lodging, and be treated in every way as the pet child of the master ? ”

A thought crossed Linden’s mind. He was going to stay in town some time: he was ignorant of its ways; he had neither friends nor relations, at least none whom he could visit and consult; moreover, hotels, he knew, were expensive; lodgings, though cheaper, might, if tolerably comfortable, greatly exceed the sum prudence would allow him to expend; would not this plan proposed by Mr. Brown, of going into a “ nice, quiet, genteel family,” be the most advisable one he could adopt? The generous benefactor of the late and ever-to-be-remembered Lady Waddilove perceived his advantage, and making the most of Clarence’s hesitation, continued, —

“ I know of a charming little abode, sir, situated in the suburbs of London, quite *rus in urbe*, as the scholars say; you can have a delightful little back parlor, looking out upon the garden, and all to yourself, I daresay.”

“ And pray, Mr. Brown,” interrupted Linden, “ what price do you think would be demanded for such enviable accommodation? If you offer me them as ‘ *a present*,’ I shall have nothing to say to them.”

“ Oh, sir,” answered Mr. Brown, “ the price will be a

trifle, — a mere trifle; but I will inquire, and let you know the exact sum in the course of the day: all they want is a respectable gentlemanlike lodger; and I am sure so near a relation of Mrs. Minden will, upon my recommendation, be received with avidity. Then, you won't have any of these valuable articles, sir? You'll repent it, sir; take my word for it, — hem! "

"Since," replied Clarence, dryly, "your word appears of so much more value than your articles, pardon me if I prefer taking the former instead of the latter."

Mr. Brown forced a smile. "Well, sir, very well, — very well, indeed. You will not go out before two o'clock; and at that time I shall call upon you respecting the commission you have favored me with."

"I will await you," said Clarence; and he bowed Mr. Brown out of the room.

"Now, really," said Linden to himself, as he paced the narrow limits of his apartment, "I do not see what better plan I can pursue, — but let me well consider what is my ultimate object. A high step in the world's ladder! — how is this to be obtained? First, by the regular method of professions; but what profession should I adopt? The church is incompatible with my object, — the army and navy with my means. Next come the regular methods of adventure and enterprise, such as marriage with a fortune," — here he paused, and looked at the glass, — "the speculation of a political pamphlet, or an ode to the minister; attendance on some dying miser of my own name, without a relation in the world, — or, in short, any other mode of making money that may decently offer itself. Now, situated as I am, without a friend in this great city, I might as well purchase my experience at as cheap a rate and in as brief a time as possible, nor do I see any plan

of doing so more promising than that proposed by Mr. Brown."

These and such like reflections, joined to the inspiring pages of the "Newgate Calendar" and "The Covent Garden Magazine," two works which Clarence dragged from their concealment under a black teatray, afforded him ample occupation till the hour of two, punctual to which time Mr. Morris Brown returned.

"Well, sir," cried Clarence, "what is your report?"

The friend of the late Lady W—— wiped his brow and gave three long sighs before he replied: "A long walk, sir, — a very long walk I have had; but I have succeeded. No thanks, sir, — no thanks; the lady, a most charming, delightful, amiable woman, will receive you with pleasure — you will have the use of a back parlor (as I said) all the morning, and a beautiful little bedroom entirely to yourself — think of that, sir. You will have an egg for breakfast, and you will dine with the family at three o'clock; quite fashionable hours you see, sir."

"And the terms?" said Linden, impatiently.

"Why, sir," replied Mr. Brown, "the lady was too genteel to talk to me about them, — you had better walk with me to her house and see if you cannot yourself agree with her."

"I will," said Clarence. "Will you wait here till I have dressed?"

Mr. Brown bowed his assent.

"I might as well," thought Clarence, as he ascended to his bedroom, "inquire into the character of this gentleman, to whose good offices I am so rashly intrusting myself." He rang his bell, — the chambermaid appeared, and was dismissed for the waiter. The character was soon asked, and soon given. For our reader's sake, we will somewhat enlarge upon it.

Mr. Morris Brown originally came into the world with the simple appellation of Moses, a name which his father — honest man — had, as the Minories can still testify, honorably borne before him. Scarcely, however, had the little Moses attained the age of five, when his father, for causes best known to himself, became a Christian. Somehow or other there is a most potent connection between the purse and the conscience, and accordingly the blessings of Heaven descended in golden showers upon the proselyte. "I shall die worth a plum," said Moses the elder (who had taken unto himself the Christian cognomen of Brown), — "I shall die worth a plum," repeated he, as he went one fine morning to speculate at the Exchange. A change of news, sharp and unexpected as a change of wind, lowered the stocks and blighted the plum. Mr. Brown was in the "Gazette" that week, and his wife in weeds for him the next. He left behind him, besides the said wife, several debts and his son Moses. Beggared by the former, our widow took a small shop in Wardour Street to support the latter. Patient, but enterprising, — cautious of risking pounds, indefatigable in raising pence, — the little Moses inherited the propensities of his Hebrew ancestors; and, though not so capable as his immediate progenitor of making a fortune, he was at least far less likely to lose one. In spite, however, of all the industry, both of mother and son, the gains of the shop were but scanty: to increase them capital was required, and all Mr. Moses Brown's capital lay in his brain. "It is a bad foundation," said the mother, with a sigh. "Not at all!" said the son, and, leaving the shop, he turned broker. Now a broker is a man who makes an income out of other people's funds, a gleaner of stray extravagances; and by doing the public the

honor of living upon them, may fairly be termed a little sort of state minister in his way. What with haunting sales, hawking china, selling the curiosities of one old lady, and purchasing the same for another, Mr. Brown managed to enjoy a very comfortable existence. Great pains and small gains will at last invert their antithesis, and make little trouble and great profit; so that by the time Mr. Brown had attained his fortieth year, the petty shop had become a large warehouse; and, if the worthy Moses, now Christianized into Morris, was not so sanguine as his father in the gathering of plums, he had been at least fortunate in the collecting of windfalls. To say truth, the Abigail of the defunct Lady Waddilove had been no unprofitable helpmate to our broker. As ingenious as benevolent, she was the owner of certain rooms of great resort in the neighborhood of St. James's, — rooms where caps and appointments were made better than anywhere else, and where credit was given, and character lost, upon terms equally advantageous to the accommodating Mrs. Brown.

Meanwhile her husband, continuing through liking what he had begun through necessity, slackened not his industry in augmenting his fortune: on the contrary, small profits were but a keener incentive to large ones, — as the glutton only sharpened by luncheon his appetite for dinner. Still was Mr. Brown the very Alcibiades of brokers: the universal genius, — suiting every man to his humor. Business, of whatever description, from the purchase of a borough to that of a brooch, was alike the object of Mr. Brown's most zealous pursuit: taverns, where country cousins put up; rustic habitations where ancient maidens resided; auction or barter; city, or hamlet, — all were the same to that enterprising spirit, which made out of every acquaintance, — a com-

mission! Sagacious and acute, Mr. Brown perceived the value of eccentricity in covering design, and found, by experience, that whatever can be laughed at as odd will be gravely considered as harmless. Several of the broker's peculiarities were, therefore, more artificial than natural; and many were the sly bargains which he smuggled into effect under the comfortable cloak of singularity. No wonder, then, that the crafty Morris grew gradually in repute as a person of infinite utility and excellent qualifications; or that the penetrating friends of his deceased sire bowed to the thriving itinerant, with a respect which they denied to many in loftier professions and more general esteem.

CHAPTER IX.

Trust me you have an exceeding fine lodging here, — very neat and private. — BEN JONSON.

It was a tolerable long walk to the abode of which the worthy broker spoke in such high terms of commendation. At length, at the suburbs towards Paddington, Mr. Brown stopped at a very small house; it stood rather retired from its surrounding neighbors, which were of a loftier and more pretending aspect than itself, and, in its awkward shape and pitiful bashfulness, looked exceedingly like a schoolboy finding himself for the first time in a *grown-up* party, and shrinking with all possible expedition into the obscurest corner he can discover. Passing through a sort of garden, in which a spot of grass lay in the embraces of a stripe of gravel, Mr. Brown knocked upon a very bright knocker at a very new door. The latter was opened, and a footboy appeared.

"Is Mrs. Copperas within?" asked the broker.

"Yees, sir," said the boy.

"Show this gentleman and myself upstairs," resumed Brown.

"Yees," reiterated the lackey.

Up a singularly narrow staircase, into a singularly diminutive drawing-room, Clarence and his guide were ushered. There, seated on a little chair by a little work-table, with one foot on a little stool and one hand on a little book, was a little, very little lady.

"This is the young gentleman," said Mr. Brown; and Clarence bowed low, in token of the introduction.

The lady returned the salutation with an affected bend, and said, in a mincing and grotesquely-subdued tone, "You are desirous, sir, of entering into the bosom of my family. We possess accommodations of a most elegant description: accustomed to the genteelest circles, enjoying the pure breezes of the Highgate hills,—and presenting to any guest we may receive the attractions of a home rather than of a lodging, you will find our retreat no less eligible than unique. You are I presume, sir, in some profession, some city avocation, or—or trade?"

"I have the misfortune," said he, smiling, "to belong to no profession."

The lady looked hard at the speaker, and then at the broker. With certain people to, belong to no profession is to be of no respectability.

"The most unexceptionable references will be given,—and *required*," resumed Mrs. Copperas.

"Certainly," said Mr. Brown,— "certainly; the gentleman is a relation of Mrs. Minden, a *very* old customer of mine."

"In that case," said Mrs. Copperas, "the affair is settled;" and, rising, she rang the bell, and ordered the footboy, whom she addressed by the grandiloquent name of *De Warens*, to show the gentleman the apartments. While Clarence was occupied in surveying the luxuries of a box at the top of the house, called a bed-chamber, which seemed just large and just hot enough for a chrysalis, and a corresponding box below, termed the back parlor, which would certainly *not* have been large enough for the said chrysalis when turned into a butterfly, Mr. Morris Brown, after duly expatiating on the

merits of Clarence, proceeded to speak of the terms; these were soon settled, for Clarence was yielding, and the lady not above three times as extortionate as she ought to have been.

Before Linden left the house, the bargain was concluded. That night his trunks were removed to his new abode, and having with incredible difficulty been squeezed into the bedroom, Clarence surveyed them with the same astonishment with which the virtuoso beheld the flies in amber, —

Not that the things were either rich or rare,
He wondered how the devil they got there!

CHAPTER X.

Such scenes had tempered with a pensive grace,
The maiden lustre of that faultless face;
Had hung a sad and dreamlike spell upon
The gliding music of her silver tone,
And shaded the soft soul which loved to lie
In the deep pathos of that volumed eye.

O'Neill, or the Rebel.

The love thus kindled between them was of no common or calculating nature; it was vigorous and delicious, and at times so suddenly intense as to appear to their young hearts, for a moment or so, with almost an awful character. — *Inesilla.*

THE reader will figure to himself a small chamber, in a remote wing of a large and noble mansion, — the walls were covered with sketches, whose extreme delicacy of outline and coloring betrayed the sex of the artist; a few shelves filled with books supported vases of flowers. A harp stood neglected at the farther end of the room, and just above hung the slender prison of one of those golden wanderers from the Canary Isles which bear to our colder land some of the gentlest music of their skies and zephyrs. The window, reaching to the ground, was open, and looked through the clusters of jasmine and honeysuckle which surrounded the low veranda beyond, upon thick and frequent copses of blossoming shrubs, redolent of spring, and sparkling in the sunny tears of a May shower, which had only just wept itself away. Embosomed in these little groves lay plots of flowers, girdled with turf as green as ever wooed the nightly dances of the fairies; and, afar off, through one artful

opening, the eye caught the glittering wanderings of water, on whose light and smiles the universal happiness of the young year seemed reflected.

But in that chamber, heedless of all around, and cold to the joy with which everything else, equally youthful, beautiful, and innocent, seemed breathing and inspired, sat a very young and lovely female. Her cheek leaned upon her hand, and large tears flowed fast and burningly over the small and delicate fingers. The comb that had confined her tresses lay at her feet, and the high dress which concealed her swelling breast had been loosened, to give vent to the suffocating and indignant throbbings which had rebelled against its cincture, — all appeared to announce that bitterness of grief when the mind, as it were, wreaks its scorn upon the body in its contempt for external seemings, and to proclaim that the present more subdued and softened sorrow had only succeeded to a burst far less quiet and uncontrolled. Woe to those who eat the bread of dependence, — their tears are wrung from the inmost sources of the heart.

Isabel St. Leger was the only child of a captain in the army, who died in her infancy. Her mother had survived him but a few months; and to the reluctant care and cold affections of a distant and wealthy relation of the same name, the warm-hearted and penniless orphan was consigned. Major-General Cornelius St. Leger, whose riches had been purchased in India at the price of his constitution, was of a temper as hot as his curries, and he wreaked it the more unsparingly on his ward, because the superior ill-temper of his maiden sister had prevented his giving vent to it upon her. That sister, Miss Diana St. Leger, was a meagre gentlewoman of about six feet high, with a loud voice and commanding aspect. Long in awe of her brother, she

rejoiced at heart to find some one whom she had such right and reason to make in awe of herself; and from the age of four to that of seventeen, Isabel suffered every insult and every degradation which could be inflicted upon her by the tyranny of her two protectors. Her spirit, however, was far from being broken by the rude shocks it received; on the contrary, her mind, gentleness itself to the kind, rose indignantly against the unjust. It was true that the sense of wrong did not break forth audibly; for, though susceptible, Isabel was meek, and her pride was concealed by the outward softness and feminacy of her temper; but she stole away from those who had wounded her heart, or trampled upon its feelings, and nourished with secret but passionate tears the memory of the harshness or injustice she had endured. Yet she was not vindictive, — her resentment was a noble, not a debasing feeling; once, when she was yet a child, Miss Diana was attacked with a fever of the most malignant and infectious kind; her brother loved himself far too well to risk his safety by attending her; the servants were too happy to wreak their hatred under the pretence of obeying their fears, — they consequently followed the example of their master; and Miss Diana St. Leger might have gone down to her ancestors “unwept, unhonored, and unsung,” if Isabel had not volunteered and enforced her attendance. Hour after hour her fairy form flittered around the sick-chamber, or sat mute and breathless by the feverish bed: she had neither fear for contagion, nor bitterness for past oppression; everything vanished beneath the one hope of serving, the one gratification of feeling herself, in the wide waste of creation, not utterly without use, as she had been hitherto without friends.

Miss St. Leger recovered. “For your recovery, in

the first place," said the doctor, "you will thank Heaven; in the second, you will thank your young relation;" and for several days the convalescent did overwhelm the happy Isabel with her praises and caresses. But this change did not last long: the chaste Diana had been too spoiled by the prosperity of many years, for the sickness of a single month to effect much good in her disposition. Her old habits were soon resumed; and though it is probable that her *heart* was in reality softened towards the poor Isabel, that softening by no means extended to her temper. In truth, the brother and sister were not without affection for one so beautiful and good; but they had been torturing slaves all their lives, and their affection was, and could be, but that of a taskmaster or a planter.

But Isabel was the only relation who ever appeared within their walls, and, among the guests with whom the luxurious mansion was crowded, she passed no less for the heiress than the dependant; to her, therefore, was offered the homage of many lips and hearts, and if her pride was perpetually galled, and her feelings insulted in private, her vanity (had that equalled her pride, and her feelings, in its susceptibility) would in no slight measure have recompensed her in public. Unhappily, however, her vanity was the least prominent quality she possessed; and the compliments of mercenary adulation were not more rejected by her heart than despised by her understanding.

Yet did she bear within her a deep fund of buried tenderness, and a mine of girlish and enthusiastic romance: dangerous gifts to one so situated, which, while they gave to her secret moments of solitude a powerful but vague attraction, probably only prepared for her future years the snare which might betray them into

error, or the delusion which would color them with regret.

Among those whom the ostentatious hospitality of General St. Leger attracted to his house, was one of very different character and pretensions to the rest. Formed to be unpopular with the generality of men, the very qualities that made him so were those which principally fascinate the higher description of women. Of ancient birth, which rendered still more displeasing the pride and coldness of his mien; of talents peculiarly framed to attract interest as well as esteem; of a deep and somewhat morbid melancholy, which, while it turned from ordinary ties, inclined yearningly towards passionate affections; of a temper where romance was only concealed from the many, to become more seductive to the few; unsocial, but benevolent; disliked, but respected; of the austere demeanor, but of passions the most fervid, though the most carefully concealed, — this man united within himself all that repels the common mass of his species, and all that irresistibly wins and fascinates the rare and romantic few. To these qualities were added a carriage and bearing of that high and commanding order which men mistake for arrogance and pretension, and women overrate in proportion to its contrast to their own. Something of mystery there was in the commencement of the deep and eventful love which took place between this person and Isabel, which I have never been able to learn. Whatever it was, it seemed to expedite and heighten the ordinary progress of love; and when in the dim twilight, beneath the first melancholy smile of the earliest star, their hearts opened audibly to each other, that confession had been made silently long since, and registered in the inmost recesses of the soul.

But their passion, which began in prosperity, was soon darkened. Whether he took offence at the haughtiness of Isabel's lover, or whether he desired to retain about him an object which he could torment and tyrannize over, no sooner did the General discover the attachment of his young relation, than he peremptorily forbade its indulgence, and assumed so insolent and overbearing an air towards the lover that the latter felt he could no longer repeat his visits to or even continue his acquaintance with the nabob.

To add to these adverse circumstances, a relation of the lover, from whom his expectations had been large, was so enraged, not only at the insult his cousin had received, but at the very idea of his forming an alliance with one in so dependent a situation, and connected with such new blood, as Isabel St. Leger, that with that arrogance which relations, however distant, think themselves authorized to assume, he enjoined his cousin, upon pain of forfeiture of favor and fortune, to renounce all idea of so disparaging an alliance. The one thus addressed was not of a temper patiently to submit to such threats: he answered them with disdain, and the breach, so dangerous to his pecuniary interest, was already begun.

So far had the history of our lover proceeded at the time in which we have introduced Isabel to the reader, and described to him the chamber to which, in all her troubles and humiliations, she was accustomed to fly, as to a sad, but still unviolated sanctuary of retreat.

The quiet of this asylum was first broken by a slight rustling among the leaves; but Isabel's back was turned towards the window, and in the engrossment of her feelings she heard it not. The thick copse that darkened the left side of the veranda was pierced, and a man

passed within the covered space, and stood still and silent before the window, intently gazing upon the figure which (though the face was turned from him) betrayed in its proportions that beauty which, in his eyes, had neither an equal nor a fault.

The figure of the stranger, though not very tall, was above the ordinary height, and gracefully, rather than robustly, formed. He was dressed in the darkest colors and the simplest fashion, which rendered yet more striking the nobleness of his mien, as well as the clear and almost delicate paleness of his complexion; his features were finely and accurately formed; and had not ill-health, long travel, or severe thought deepened too much the lines of the countenance, and sharpened its contour, the classic perfection of those features would have rendered him undeniably and even eminently handsome: as it was, the paleness and the somewhat worn character of his face, joined to an expression, at first glance, rather haughty and repellent, made him lose in physical, what he certainly gained in intellectual beauty. His eyes were large, deep, and melancholy; and had the hat which now hung over his brow been removed, it would have displayed a forehead of remarkable boldness and power.

Altogether, the face was cast in a rare and intellectual mould, and, if wanting in those more luxuriant attractions common to the age of the stranger, who could scarcely have attained his twenty-sixth year, it betokened, at least, that predominance of mind over body, which, in some eyes, is the most requisite characteristic of masculine beauty.

With a soft and noiseless step, the stranger moved from his station without the window, and, entering the room, stole towards the spot on which Isabel was sitting.

He leaned over her chair, and his eye rested upon his own picture, and a letter in his own writing, over which the tears of the young orphan flowed fast.

A moment more of agitated happiness for one, of unconscious and continued sadness for the other, —

'T is past, — her lover's at her feet.

And what indeed "was to them the world beside, with all its changes of time and tide?" Joy, hope, — all blissful and bright sensations, lay mingled like meeting waters, in one sunny stream of heartfelt and unfathomable enjoyment; but this passed away, and the remembrance of bitterness and evil succeeded.

"Oh, Algernon!" said Isabel, in a low voice, "is this your promise?"

"Believe me," said Mordaunt, for it was indeed he, "I struggled long with my feelings, but in vain; and for both our sakes, I rejoice at the conquest they obtained. I listened only to a deceitful delusion when I imagined I was obeying the dictates of reason. Ah, dearest, why should we part for the sake of dubious and distant evils, when the misery of absence is the most certain, the most unceasing evil we can endure?"

"For your sake, and therefore for mine!" interrupted Isabel, struggling with her tears. "I am a beggar and an outcast. You must not link your fate with mine. I could bear, Heaven knows how willingly, poverty and all its evils *for* you and *with* you; but I cannot *bring* them upon you."

"Nor will you," said Mordaunt, passionately, as he covered the hand he held with his burning kisses. "Have I not enough for both of us? It is my love, not poverty, that I beseech you to share."

"No! Algernon, you cannot deceive me: your own

estate will be torn from you by the law; if you marry me, your cousin will not assist you: I, you know too well, can command nothing; and I shall see you, for whom in my fond and bright dreams I have presaged everything great and exalted, buried in an obscurity from which your talents can never rise, and suffering the pangs of poverty, and dependence, and humiliation like my own, and—and—I—should be the wretch who caused you all. Never, Algernon, never! I love you too,—too well!”

But the effort which wrung forth the determination of the tone in which these words were uttered was too violent to endure; and, as the full desolation of her despair crowded fast and dark upon the orphan's mind, she sank back upon her chair in very sickness of soul, nor heeded, in her unconscious misery, that her hand was yet clasped by her lover, and that her head drooped upon his bosom.

“Isabel,” he said, in a low, sweet tone, which to her ear seemed the concentration of all earthly music,—“Isabel, look up, my own, my beloved,—look up and hear me. Perhaps you say truly when you tell me that the possessions of my house shall melt away from me, and that my relation will not offer to me the precarious bounty which, even if he did offer, I would reject; but, dearest, are there not a thousand paths open to me,—the law, the state, the army?—you are silent, Isabel,—speak!”

Isabel did not reply; but the soft eyes which rested upon his told, in their despondency, how little her reason was satisfied by the arguments he urged.

“Besides,” he continued, “we know not yet whether the law may not decide in my favor; at all events, years may pass before the judgment is given: those years make

the prime and verdure of our lives, — let us not waste them in mourning over blighted hopes and severed hearts; let us snatch what happiness is yet in our power, nor anticipate, while the heavens are still bright above us, the burden of the thunder or the cloud.”

Isabel was one of the least selfish and most devoted of human beings, yet she must be forgiven if at that moment her resolution faltered, and the overpowering thought of being in reality *his* forever flashed upon her mind. It passed from her the moment it was formed, and, rising from a situation in which the touch of that dear hand, and the breath of those wooing lips endangered the virtue, and weakened the strength of her resolves, she withdrew herself from his grasp, and while she averted her eyes, which dared not encounter his, she said in a low but firm voice, —

“It is in vain, Algernon; it is in vain. I can be to you nothing but a blight or burden, — nothing but a source of privation and anguish. Think you that I *will* be this? — no, I will not darken your fair hopes, and impede your reasonable ambition. Go” (and here her voice faltered for a moment, but soon recovered its tone) — “go, Algernon, *dear* Algernon; and, if my foolish heart will not ask you to think of me no more, I can at least implore you to think of me only as one who would die rather than cost you a moment of that poverty and debasement, the bitterness of which she has felt herself, and who, for that very reason, tears herself away from you forever.”

“Stay, Isabel, stay!” cried Mordaunt, as he caught hold of her robe; “give me but one word more, and you shall leave me. Say that if I can create for myself a new source of independence; if I can carve out a road where the ambition you erroneously impute to me can

be gratified, as well as the more moderate wishes our station has made natural to us to form; say, that if I do this, I may permit myself to hope; say, that *when* I have done it, I may claim you as my own!"

Isabel paused, and turned once more her face towards his own. Her lips moved, and though the words died within her heart, yet Mordaunt read well their import in the blushing cheek and the heaving bosom, and the lips which one ray of hope and comfort was sufficient to kindle into smiles. He gazed, and all obstacles, all difficulties disappeared; the gulf of time seemed past, and he felt as if already he had earned and won his reward.

He approached her yet nearer: one kiss on those lips, one pressure of that thrilling hand, one long, last embrace of that shrinking and trembling form, — and then, as the door closed upon his view, he felt that the sunshine of nature had passed away, and that in the midst of the laughing and peopled earth *he* stood in darkness and alone.

CHAPTER XI.

He who would know mankind must be at home with all men.

STEPHEN MONTAGUE.

WE left Clarence safely deposited in his little lodgings. Whether from the heat of his apartment or the restlessness of a migration of beds produces in certain constitutions, his slumbers on the first night of his arrival were disturbed and brief. He rose early and descended to the parlor; Mr. de Warens, the nobly-appellated footboy, was laying the breakfast-cloth. From three painted shelves, which constituted the library of "Copperas Bower," as its owners gracefully called their habitation, Clarence took down a book very prettily bound: it was "Poems by a Nobleman." No sooner had he read two pages than he did exactly what the reader would have done, and restored the volume respectfully to its place. He then drew his chair towards the window, and wistfully eyed sundry ancient nurserymaids, who were leading their infant charges to the "fresh fields and pastures new," of what is now the Regent's Park.

In about an hour Mrs. Copperas descended, and mutual compliments were exchanged; to her succeeded Mr. Copperas, who was well scolded for his laziness; and to them, Master Adolphus Copperas, who was also chidingly termed a naughty darling for the same offence. Now, then, Mrs. Copperas prepared the tea, which she did in the approved method, adopted by all ladies to whom economy is dearer than renown,—namely, the

least possible quantity of the *soi-disant* Chinese plant was first sprinkled by the least possible quantity of hot water! after this mixture had become as black and as bitter as it could possibly be, without any adjunct from the apothecary's skill, it was suddenly drenched with a copious diffusion, and as suddenly poured forth, weak, washy, and abominable, into four cups, severally appertaining unto the four partakers of the matutinal nectar.

Then the conversation began to flow. Mrs. Copperas was a fine lady, and a sentimentalist, — very observant of the little niceties of phrase and manner. Mr. Copperas was a stock-jobber and a wit; loved a good hit in each capacity; was very round, very short, and very much like a John Dory, — and saw in the features and mind of the little Copperas the exact representative of himself.

"Adolphus, my love," said Mrs. Copperas, "mind what I told you, and sit upright. Mr. Linden, will you allow me to cut you a *leetle* piece of this roll?"

"Thank you," said Clarence, "I will trouble you rather for the whole of it."

Conceive Mrs. Copperas's dismay! from that moment she saw herself eaten out of house and home; besides, as she afterwards observed to her friend, Miss Barbara York, the "vulgarity of such an amazing appetite!"

"Any commands in the city, Mr. Linden?" asked the husband: "a coach will pass by our door in a few minutes, — must be on 'Change in half an hour. Come, my love, another cup of tea; make haste, — I have scarcely a moment to take *my fare* for the inside, before coachee takes *his* for the outside. Ha, ha, ha! Mr. Linden."

"Lord, Mr. Copperas," said his helpmate, "how can you be so silly? — setting such an example to your son,

too; never mind him, Adolphus, my love, — fie, child, a'n't you ashamed of yourself? — never put the spoon in your cup till you have done tea. I must really send you to school to learn manners. — We have a very pretty little collection of books here, Mr. Linden, if you would like to read an hour or two after breakfast, — child, take your hands out of your pockets, — all the best English classics, I believe, — ‘Telemachus,’ and Young’s ‘Night Thoughts,’ and ‘Joseph Andrews,’ and the ‘Spectator,’ and Pope’s ‘Iliad,’ and Creech’s ‘Lucretius;’ but you will look over them yourself! This is Liberty Hall, as well as Copperas Bower, Mr. Linden!”

“Well, my love,” said the stock-jobber, “I believe I must be off. Here, Tom, Tom” (Mr. de Warens had just entered the room with some more hot water, to weaken still farther “the poor remains of what was once” — the tea!), — “Tom, just run out and stop the coach, it will be by in five minutes.”

“Have not I prayed, and besought you, many and many a time, Mr. Copperas,” said the lady, rebukingly, “not to call De Warens by his Christian name? Don’t you know that all people in genteel life who only keep one servant invariably call him by his surname, as if he were the butler, you know?”

“Now, that is too good, my love,” said Copperas. “I will call poor Tom by any surname you please, but I really can’t pass him off for a butler! Ha, ha, ha! — you must excuse me there, my love!”

“And pray, why not, Mr. Copperas? I have known many a butler bungle more at a cork than he does; and pray tell me, who did you ever see wait better at dinner?”

“He wait at dinner, my love! it is not he who waits.”

"Who then, Mr. Copperas?"

"Why *we*, my love, — it's *we* who wait for dinner: but that's the cook's fault, not his."

"Pshaw, Mr. Copperas, — Adolphus, my love, sit upright, darling."

Here De Warens cried from the bottom of the stairs:

"Measter, the coach be coming up."

"There won't be room for it to turn, then," said the facetious Mr. Copperas, looking round the apartment, as if he took the words literally.

"What coach is it, boy?"

Now that was not the age in which coaches scoured the city every half-hour, and Mr. Copperas knew the name of the coach as well as he knew his own.

"It be the Swallow coach, sir."

"Oh, very well; then since I have swallowed in the roll, I will now roll into the Swallow, — ha, ha, ha! Good-by, Mr. Linden."

No sooner had the witty stock-jobber left the room than Mrs. Copperas seemed to expand into a new existence. "My husband, sir," said she, apologetically, "is *so* odd, but he's an excellent, sterling character; and that, you know, Mr. Linden, tells more in the bosom of a family than all the shining qualities which captivate the imagination. I am sure, Mr. Linden, that the moralist is right in admonishing us to prefer the gold to the tinsel. I have now been married some years, and every year seems happier than the last; but then, Mr. Linden, it is such a pleasure to contemplate the growing graces of the sweet pledge of our mutual love, — Adolphus, my dear, keep your feet still, and take your hands out of your pockets!"

A short pause ensued.

"We see a great deal of company," said Mrs. Cop-

peras, pompously, "and of the very best description. Sometimes we are favored by the society of the great Mr. Talbot, a gentleman of immense fortune, and quite the courtier: he is, it is true, a little eccentric in his dress; but then he was a celebrated beau in his young days. He is our next neighbor; you can see his house out of the window, just across the garden, — there! We have also, sometimes, our humble board graced by a very elegant friend of mine, Miss Barbara York, a lady of very high connections, her first cousin was a lord mayor, — Adolphus, my dear, what are you about? Well, Mr. Linden, you will find your retreat quite undisturbed. I must go about the household affairs; not that I do anything more than superintend, you know, sir; but I think no lady should be above consulting her husband's interests, — that's what I call true old English conjugal affection. Come, Adolphus, my dear."

And Clarence was now alone. "I fear," thought he, "that I shall get on very indifferently with these people. But it will not do for me to be misanthropical (and, as Dr. Latinas was wont to say), the great merit of philosophy, when we cannot *command* circumstances, is to *reconcile* us to them."

CHAPTER XII.

A retired beau is one of the most instructive spectacles in the world.

STEPHEN MONTAGUE.

It was quite true that Mrs. Copperas saw a great deal of company; for, at a certain charge, upon certain days, any individual might have the honor of sharing her family repast: and many, of various callings, though chiefly in commercial life, met at her miscellaneous board. Clarence must, indeed, have been difficult to please, or obtuse of observation, if, in the variety of her guests he had not found something either to interest or amuse him. Heavens! what a motley group were accustomed, twice in the week, to assemble there! the little dining-parlor seemed a human oven; and it must be owned that Clarence was no slight magnet of attraction to the female part of the guests. Mrs. Copperas's bosom friend in especial, the accomplished Miss Barbara York, darted the most tender glances on the handsome young stranger; but whether or not a nose remarkably prominent and long, prevented the glances from taking full effect, it is certain that Clarence seldom repaid them with that affectionate ardor which Miss Barbara York had ventured to anticipate. The only persons, indeed, for whom he felt any sympathetic attraction, were of the same sex as himself. The one was Mr. Talbot, the old gentleman whom Mrs. Copperas had described as the perfect courtier; the other, a young artist of the name of Warner. Talbot, to Clarence's great astonishment (for Mrs. Copperas's eulogy had prepared him for some-

thing eminently displeasing), was a man of birth, fortune, and manners peculiarly graceful and attractive. It is true, however, that, despite of his vicinity, and Mrs. Copperas's urgent solicitations, he very seldom honored her with his company, and he always cautiously sent over his servant in the morning to inquire the names and number of her expected guests: nor was he ever known to share the plenteous board of the stock-jobber's lady whenever any other partaker of its dainties, save Clarence and the young artist, was present. The latter the old gentleman really liked; and as for one truly well-born and well-bred, — there is no vulgarity except in the mind, — the slender means, obscure birth, and struggling profession of Warner, were circumstances which, as they increased the merit of a gentle manner and a fine mind, spoke rather in his favor than the reverse. Mr. Talbot was greatly struck by Clarence Linden's conversation and appearance; and indeed there was in Talbot's taste so strong a bias to aristocratic externals, that Clarence's air alone would have been sufficient to win the good graces of a man who had, perhaps more than most courtiers of his time, cultivated the arts of manner and the secrets of address.

"You will call upon me soon?" said he to Clarence, when, after dining one day with the Copperases and their inmate, he rose to return home. And Clarence, delighted with the urbanity and liveliness of his new acquaintance, readily promised that he would.

Accordingly, the next day, Clarence called upon Mr. Talbot. The house, as Mrs. Copperas had before said, adjoined her own, and was only separated from it by a garden. It was a dull mansion of brick, which had disdained the frippery of paint and whitewashing, and had indeed been built many years previously to the erec-

tion of the modern habitations which surrounded it. It was, therefore, as a consequence of this priority of birth, more sombre than the rest, and had a peculiarly forlorn and solitary look. As Clarence approached the door, he was struck with the size of the house, — it was of very considerable extent, and in the more favorable situations of London would have passed for a very desirable and spacious tenement. An old man, whose accurate precision of dress bespoke the tastes of the master, opened the door, and, after ushering Clarence through two long, and to his surprise, almost splendidly-furnished rooms, led him into a third, where, seated at a small writing-table, he found Mr. Talbot. That person, one whom Clarence then little thought would hereafter exercise no small influence over his fate, was of a figure and countenance well worthy the notice of a description.

His own hair, quite white, was carefully and artificially curled, and gave a Grecian cast to features whose original delicacy, and exact, though small proportions, not even age could destroy. His eyes were large, black, and sparkled with almost youthful vivacity; and his mouth, which was the best feature he possessed, developed teeth, white and even as rows of ivory. Though small and somewhat too slender in the proportions of his figure, nothing could exceed the ease and the grace of his motions and air; and his dress, though singularly rich in its materials, eccentric in its fashion, and, from its evident study, unseemly to his years, served, nevertheless, to render rather venerable than ridiculous a mien which could almost have carried off any absurdity, and which the fashion of the garb peculiarly became. The *tout ensemble* was certainly that of a man who was still vain of his exterior, and conscious of its effect;

and it was as certainly impossible to converse with Mr. Talbot for five minutes, without merging every less respectful impression in the magical fascination of his manner.

"I thank you, Mr. Linden," said Talbot, rising, "for your accepting so readily an old man's invitation. If I have felt pleasure in discovering that we were to be neighbors, you may judge what that pleasure is to-day at finding you my visitor."

Clarence, who, to do him justice, was always ready at returning a fine speech, replied in a similar strain, and the conversation flowed on agreeably enough. There was more than a moderate collection of books in the room, and this circumstance led Clarence to allude to literary subjects; these Mr. Talbot took up with avidity, and touched with a light but graceful criticism upon many of the then modern, and some of the older writers. He seemed delighted to find himself understood and appreciated by Clarence, and every moment of Linden's visit served to ripen their acquaintance into intimacy. At length they talked upon Copperas Bower and its inmates.

"You will find your host and hostess," said the old gentleman, "certainly of a different order from the persons with whom it is easy to see you have associated; but, at your happy age, a year or two may be very well thrown away upon observing the manners and customs of those whom, in later life, you may often be called upon to conciliate, or perhaps to control. That man will never be a perfect gentleman who lives only with gentlemen. To be a man of the world, we must view that world in every grade, and in every perspective. In short, the most practical art of wisdom is that which extracts from things the very quality they least appear

to possess; and the actor in the world, like the actor on the stage, should find 'a basket-hilted sword very convenient to carry milk in.'¹ As for me, I have survived my relations and friends. I cannot keep late hours, nor adhere to the unhealthy customs of good society; nor do I think that, to a man of my age and habits, any remuneration would adequately repay the sacrifice of health or comfort. I am, therefore, well content to sink into a hermitage in an obscure corner of this great town, and only occasionally to revive my 'past remembrances of higher state,' by admitting a few old acquaintances to drink my bachelor's tea, and talk over the news of the day. Hence, you see, Mr. Linden, I pick up two or three novel anecdotes of state and scandal, and maintain my importance at Copperas Bower by retailing them second hand. Now that you are one of the inmates of that abode, I shall be more frequently its guest. By the by, I will let you into a secret: know that I am somewhat a lover of the marvellous, and like to indulge a little embellishing exaggeration in any place where there is no chance of finding me out. Mind, therefore, my dear Mr. Linden, that you take no ungenerous advantage of this confession; but suffer me, now and then, to tell my stories my own way, even when you think truth would require me to tell them in another."

"Certainly," said Clarence, laughing; "let us make an agreement: you shall tell your stories as you please, if you will grant me the same liberty in paying my compliments; and, if I laugh aloud at the stories, you shall promise me not to laugh aloud at the compliments."

"It is a bond," said Talbot; "and a very fit exchange of service it is. It will be a problem in human nature

¹ See the witty inventory of a player's goods in the "Tatler."

to see who has the best of it: you shall pay your court by flattering the people present, and I mine by abusing those absent. Now, in spite of your youth and curling locks, I will wager that I succeed the best; for in vanity there is so great a mixture of envy, that no compliment is like a judicious abuse, — to enchant your acquaintance, ridicule his friends."

"Ah, sir," said Clarence, "this opinion of yours, is, I trust, a little in the French School, where brilliancy is more studied than truth, and where an ill opinion of our species always has the merit of passing for profound."

Talbot smiled, and shook his head. "My dear young friend," said he, "it is quite right that you, who are coming into the world, should think well of it; and it is also quite right that I, who am going out of it, should console myself by trying to despise it. However, let me tell you, my young friend, that he whose opinion of mankind is not too elevated, will always be the most benevolent, because the most indulgent to those errors incidental to human imperfection: to place our nature in too flattering a view is only to court disappointment, and end in misanthropy. The man who sets out with expecting to find all his fellow-creatures heroes of virtue, will conclude by condemning them as monsters of vice; and, on the contrary, the least exacting judge of actions will be the most lenient. If God, in his own perfection, did not see so many frailties in us, think you he would be so gracious to our virtues?"

"And yet," said Clarence, "we remark every day examples of the highest excellence."

"Yes," replied Talbot, "of the *highest*, but not of the most *constant* excellence. He knows very little of the human heart who imagines we cannot do a good action;

but, alas! he knows still less of it who supposes we can be always doing good actions. In exactly the same ratio we see every day the greatest crimes are committed; but we find no wretch so depraved as to be always committing crimes. Man cannot be perfect even in guilt."

In this manner Talbot and his young visitor conversed, till Clarence, after a stay of unwarrantable length, rose to depart.

"Well," said Talbot, "if we now rightly understand each other, we shall be the best friends in the world. As we shall expect great things from each other sometimes, we will have no scruple in exacting an heroic sacrifice every now and then; for instance, I will ask you to punish yourself by an occasional *tête-à-tête* with an ancient gentleman; and as we can also, by the same reasoning, pardon great faults in each other, if they are not often committed, so I will forgive you with all my heart whenever you refuse my invitations, if you do not refuse them often. And now farewell till we meet again."

It seemed singular, and almost unnatural to Linden, that a man like Talbot, of birth, fortune, and great fastidiousness of taste and temper, should have formed any sort of acquaintance, however slight and distant, with the facetious stock-jobber and his wife; but the fact is easily explained by a reference to the vanity which we shall see hereafter made the ruling passion of Talbot's nature. This vanity, which, branching forth into a thousand eccentricities, displayed itself in the singularity of his dress, the studied yet graceful warmth of his manner, his attention to the minutiae of life, — his desire, craving and insatiate, to receive from every one, however insignificant, his *obolum* of admiration: this vanity, once flattered by the obsequious hom-

age it obtained from the wonder and reverence of the Copperases, reconciled his taste to the disgust it so frequently and necessarily conceived; and, having in great measure resigned his former acquaintance, and wholly outlived his friends, he was contented to purchase the applause which had become to him a necessary of life, at the humble market more immediately at his command.

There is no dilemma in which vanity cannot find an expedient to develop its form, — no stream of circumstances in which its buoyant and light nature will not rise to float upon the surface. And its ingenuity is as fertile as that of the player who (his wardrobe allowing him no other method of playing the fop) could still exhibit the prevalent passion for distinction by wearing stockings of different colors.

CHAPTER XIII.

Who dares

Interpret then my life for me, as 't were

One of the undistinguishable many ?

COLERIDGE'S *Wallenstein*.

THE first time Clarence had observed the young artist, he had taken a deep interest in his appearance. Pale, thin, undersized, and slightly deformed, the sanctifying mind still shed over the humble frame a spell more powerful than beauty. Absent in manner, melancholy in air, and never conversing except upon subjects upon which his imagination was excited, there was yet a gentleness about him which could not fail to conciliate and prepossess; nor did Clarence omit any opportunity to soften his reserve, and wind himself into his more intimate acquaintance. Warner, the only support of an aged and infirm grandmother (who had survived her immediate children), was distantly related to Mrs. Copperas; and that lady extended to him, with ostentatious benevolence, her favor and support. It is true that she did not impoverish the young Adolphus to enrich her kinsman, but she allowed him a seat at her hospitable board, whenever it was not otherwise filled; and all that she demanded in return was a picture of herself, another of Mr. Copperas, a third of Master Adolphus, a fourth of the black cat, and from time to time sundry other lesser productions of his genius, of which, through the agency of Mr. Brown, she secretly disposed at a price that sufficiently remunerated her for whatever havoc the slender appetite of the young painter was able to effect.

By this arrangement, Clarence had many opportunities of gaining that intimacy with Warner which had become to him an object; and though the painter, constitutionally diffident and shy, was at first averse to, and even awed by, the ease, boldness, fluent speech, and confident address of a man much younger than himself, yet at last he could not resist being decoyed into familiarity; and the youthful pair gradually advanced from companionship into friendship. There was a striking contrast between the two: Clarence was bold and frank, Warner close and timid. Both had superior abilities, — but the abilities of Clarence were for action, those of Warner for art; both were ambitious, but the ambition of Clarence was that of circumstances rather than character; compelled to carve his own fortunes without sympathy or aid, he braced his mind to the effort, though naturally too gay for the austerity and too genial for the selfishness of ambition. But the very essence of Warner's nature was the feverish desire of fame; it poured through his veins like lava; it preyed as a worm upon his cheek; it corroded his natural sleep; it blackened the color of his thoughts; it shut out, as with an impenetrable wall, the wholesome energies and enjoyments and objects of living men; and, taking from him all the vividness of the present, all the tenderness of the past, constrained his heart to dwell forever and forever amidst the dim and shadowy chimeras of a future he was fated never to enjoy.

But these differences of character, so far from disturbing, rather cemented their friendship; and while Warner (notwithstanding his advantage of age) paid involuntary deference to the stronger character of Clarence, he, in his turn, derived that species of pleasure by which he was most gratified, from the affectionate

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and unenvious interest Clarence took in his speculations of future distinction, and the unwearying admiration with which he would sit by his side and watch the colors start from the canvas beneath the real, though uncultured genius of the youthful painter. Hitherto Warner had bounded his attempts to some of the lesser efforts of the art; he had now yielded to the urgent enthusiasm of his nature, and conceived the plan of an historical picture. Oh! what sleepless nights, what struggles of the teeming fancy with the dense brain, what labors of the untiring thought, wearing and intense as disease itself, did it cost the ambitious artist to work out in the stillness of his soul, and from its confused and conflicting images, the design of this long-meditated and idolized performance. But when it *was* designed; when shape upon shape grew and swelled, and glowed from the darkness of previous thought upon the painter's mind; when, shutting his eyes in the very credulity of delight, the whole work arose before him, glossy with its fresh hues, bright, completed, faultless, arrayed, as it were, and decked out for immortality, — oh! then what a full and gushing moment of rapture broke like a released stream upon his soul! What a recompense for wasted years, health, and hope! What a coronal to the visions and transports of genius; brief, it is true, but how steeped in the very halo of a light that might well be deemed the glory of heaven!

But the vision fades, the gorgeous shapes sweep on into darkness, and, waking from his reverie, the artist sees before him only the dull walls of his narrow chamber; the canvas stretched a blank upon its frame; the works, maimed, crude, unfinished, of an inexperienced hand, lying idly around; and feels himself — *himself*, but one moment before the creator of a world of wonders,

the master spirit of shapes glorious and majestic beyond the shapes of men — dashed down from his momentary height, and despoiled both of his sorcery and his throne.

It was just in such a moment that Warner, starting up, saw Linden (who had silently entered his room) standing motionless before him.

"Oh! Linden," said the artist, "I have had so superb a dream, — a dream which, though I have before snatched some such vision by fits and glimpses, I never beheld so realized, so perfect as now: and — but you shall see, you shall judge for yourself; I will sketch out the design for you;" and with a piece of chalk, and a rapid hand, Warner conveyed to Linden the outline of his conception. His young friend was eager in his praise and his predictions of renown, and Warner listened to him with a fondness which spread over his pale cheek a richer flush than lover ever caught from the whispers of his beloved.

"Yes," said he, as he rose, and his sunken and small eye flashed out with a feverish brightness, — "yes, if my hand does not fail my thought, it shall rival even —" Here the young painter stopped short, abashed at that indiscretion of enthusiasm about to utter to another the hoarded vanities hitherto locked in his heart of hearts as a sealed secret, almost from himself.

"But come," said Clarence, affectionately, "your hand is feverish and dry, and of late you have seemed more languid than you were wont, — come, Warner, you want exercise; it is a beautiful evening, and you shall explain your picture still farther to me as we walk."

Accustomed to yield to Clarence, Warner mechanically and abstractedly obeyed; they walked out into the open streets.

"Look around us," said Warner, pausing, — "look among this toiling, and busy, and sordid mass of beings, who claim with us the fellowship of clay. The poor labor, the rich feast; the only distinction between them is that of the insect and the brute: like them they fulfil the same end, and share the same oblivion, — they die, a new race springs up, and the very grass upon their graves fades not so soon as their memory. Who that is conscious of a higher nature would not pine and fret himself away to be confounded with these? Who would not burn, and sicken, and parch with a delirious longing to divorce themselves from so vile a herd? What have their petty pleasures and their mean aims to atone for the abasement of grinding down our spirits to their level? Is not the distinction from their blended and common name a sufficient recompense for all that ambition suffers or foregoes? Oh, for one brief hour (I ask no more) of living honor, one feeling of conscious, unfearing certainty, that fame has conquered death; and then for this humble and impotent clay, this drag on the spirit which it does not assist but fetter, this wretched machine of pains and aches and feverish throbbings and vexed inquietudes, why, let the worms consume it, and the grave hide, — for Fame there is *no* grave."

At that moment one of those unfortunate women who earn their polluted sustenance by becoming the hypocrites of passion, abruptly accosted them.

"Miserable wretch!" said Warner, loathingly, as he pushed her aside; but Clarence, with a kindlier feeling, noticed that her haggard cheek was wet with tears, and that her frame, weak and trembling, could scarcely support itself; he, therefore, with that promptitude of charity which gives ere it discriminates, put some

pecuniary assistance in her hand, and joined his comrade.

"You would not have spoken so tauntingly to the poor girl had you remarked her distress," said Clarence.

"And why," said Warner, mournfully, — "why be so cruel as to prolong, even for a few hours, an existence which mercy would only seek to bring nearer to the tomb? That unfortunate is but one of the herd, one of the victims to pleasures which debase by their progress, and ruin by their end. Yet perhaps she is not worse than the usual followers of love: of love, that passion the most worshipped, yet the least divine, — selfish and exacting, — drawing its aliment from destruction, and its very nature from tears."

"Nay," said Clarence, "you confound the two loves, the Eros and the Anteros, gods whom my good tutor was wont so sedulously to distinguish; you surely do not inveigh thus against *all* love?"

"I cry you mercy," said Warner, with something of sarcasm in his pensiveness of tone. "We must not dispute, so I will hold my peace; but make love all you will, what are the false smiles of a lip which a few years can blight as an autumn leaf? What the homage of a heart as feeble and mortal as your own? Why, I, with a few strokes of a little hair and an idle mixture of worthless colors will create a beauty in whose mouth there shall be no hollowness, in whose lip there shall be no fading, — there, in your admiration you shall have no need of flattery, and no fear of falsehood; you shall not be stung with jealousy, nor maddened with treachery; nor watch with a breaking heart over waning bloom, and departing health, till the grave open, and your perishable paradise is *not*. No; the mimic work is mightier than the original, for it outlasts it: your

love cannot wither it, or your desertion destroy, — your very death, as the being who called it into life, only stamps it with a holier value.”

“And so then,” said Clarence, “you would seriously relinquish, for the mute copy of the mere features, those affections which no painting can express?”

“Ay,” said the painter, with an energy unusual to his quiet manner, and slightly wandering in his answer from Clarence’s remark, — “ay, one serves not two mistresses: mine is the glory of my art. Oh! what are the cold shapes of this tame earth, where the footsteps of the gods have vanished, and left no trace, — the blemished forms, the debased brows, and the jarring features, to the glorious and gorgeous images which I can conjure up at my will? Away with human beauties, to him whose nights are haunted with the forms of angels and wanderers from the stars, the spirits of all things lovely and exalted in the universe: the universe as it *was*, — when to fountain, and stream, and hill, and to every tree which the summer clothed, was allotted the vigil of a Nymph! — when through glade and by waterfall, at glossy noontide, or under the silver stars, the forms of Godhead and Spirit were seen to walk; when the sculptor modelled his mighty work from the beauty and strength of Heaven, and the poet lay in the shade to dream of the Naiad and the Faun, and the Olympian dwellers whom he waked in rapture to behold; and the painter, not as now, shaping from shadow and in solitude the dim glories of his heart, caught at once his inspiration from the glow of earth and its living wanderers, and, lo, the canvas breathed! Oh! what are the dull realities and the abortive offspring of this altered and humbled world — the world of meaner and dwarfish men — to him whose realms are peopled with visions like these?”

And the artist, whose ardor, long excited, and pent within, had at last thus audibly, and to Clarence's astonishment, burst forth, paused as if to recall himself from his wandering enthusiasm. Such moments of excitement were, indeed, rare with him, except when utterly alone, and even then, were almost invariably followed by that depression of spirit by which all overwrought susceptibility is succeeded. A change came over his face, like that of a cloud when the sunbeam which gilded, leaves it, and, with a slight sigh and a subdued tone, he resumed: —

“So, my friend, you see what our art can do even for the humblest professor, when I, a poor, friendless, patronless artist, can thus indulge myself by forgetting the present. But I have not yet explained to you the attitude of my principal figure;” and Warner proceeded once more to detail the particulars of his intended picture. It must be confessed that he had chosen a fine, though an arduous subject: it was the “Trial of Charles I. ;” and as the painter, with the enthusiasm of his profession and the eloquence peculiar to himself, dwelt upon the various expressions of the various forms which that extraordinary judgment-court afforded, no wonder that Clarence forgot, with the artist himself, the disadvantages Warner had to encounter, in the inexperience of an unregulated taste, and an imperfect professional education.

CHAPTER XIV.

All manners take a tincture from our own,
Or come discolored through our passions shown.

POPE.

What! give up liberty, property, and, as the "Gazetteer" says, lie down to be saddled with wooden shoes. — *Vicar of Wakefield.*

THERE was something in the melancholy and reflective character of Warner resembling that of Mordaunt. Had they lived in these days, perhaps both the artist and the philosopher had been poets. But (with regard to the latter) at that time poetry was not the customary vent for deep thought or passionate feeling. Gray, it is true, though unjustly condemned as artificial and meretricious in his style, had infused into the scanty works which he has bequeathed to immortality, a pathos and a richness foreign to the literature of the age; and, subsequently, Goldsmith, in the affecting, yet somewhat enervate simplicity of his verse, had obtained for poetry a brief respite from a school at once declamatory and powerless, and led her forth for a "Sunshine Holiday," into the village green, and under the hawthorn shade. But, though the softer and meeker feelings had struggled into a partial and occasional vent, those which partook more of passion and of thought, the deep, the wild, the fervid, were still without "the music of a voice." For the after century it was reserved to restore what we may be permitted to call the spirit of our national literature; to forsake the *clinquant* of the French mimickers of classic gold; to exchange a thrice-adulterated Hippo-

crene for the pure well of Shakespeare and of nature; to clothe philosophy in the gorgeous and solemn majesty of appropriate music; and to invest passion with a language as burning as its thought and rapid as its impulse. At that time reflection found its natural channel in metaphysical inquiry or political speculation; both valuable, perhaps, but neither profound. It was a bold, and a free, and an inquisitive age, but not one in which thought ran over its set and stationary banks, and watered even the common flowers of verse: not one in which Lucretius could have embodied the dreams of Epicurus; Shakespeare lavished the mines of a superhuman wisdom upon his fairy palaces and enchanted isles; or the Beautifier¹ of this common earth have called forth,—

The motion of the spirit that impels
All thinking things, all objects of all thought;

or Disappointment and Satiety have hallowed their human griefs by a pathos wrought from whatever is magnificent, and grand, and lovely in the unknown universe; or the speculations of a great, but visionary,² mind have raised, upon subtlety and doubt, a vast and irregular pile of verse, full of dim-lighted cells, and winding galleries, in which what treasures lie concealed! That was an age in which poetry took one path, and contemplation another: those who were addicted to the latter pursued it in its orthodox roads; and many, whom nature, perhaps, intended for poets, the wizard custom converted into speculators or critics.

It was this which gave to Algernon's studies their peculiar hue; while, on the other hand, the taste for the fine arts which then universally prevailed, directed to the creations of painting, rather than those of poetry, more

¹ Wordsworth.

² Shelley.

really congenial to his powers, the intense imagination and passion for glory which marked and pervaded the character of the artist.

But, as we have seen that that passion for glory made the great characteristic difference between Clarence and Warner, so also did that passion terminate any resemblance which Warner bore to Algernon Mordaunt. With the former, a rank and unwholesome plant, it grew up to the exclusion of all else; with the latter, subdued and regulated, it *sheltered*, not *withered* the virtues by which it was surrounded. With Warner, ambition was a passionate desire to separate himself by fame from the herd of other men; with Mordaunt, to bind himself by charity yet closer to his kind: with the one it produced a disgust to his species; with the other, a pity and a love: with the one, power was the badge of distinction; with the other, the means to bless! But our story lingers.

It was now the custom of Warner to spend the whole day at his work, and wander out with Clarence, when the evening darkened, to snatch a brief respite of exercise and air. Often, along the lighted and populous streets, would the two young and unfriended competitors for this world's high places, roam with the various crowd, moralizing as they went, or holding dim conjecture upon their destinies to be. And often would they linger beneath the portico of some house where, "haunted with great resort," Pleasure and Pomp held their nightly revels, to listen to the music that, through the open windows, stole over the rare exotics with which wealth mimics the southern scents, and floated, mellowing by distance, along the unworthy streets; and while they stood together, silent, and each feeding upon separate thoughts, the artist's pale lip would curl with scorn, as

he heard the laugh and the sounds of a frivolous and hollow mirth ring from the crowd within, and startle the air from the silver spell which music had laid upon it. "These," would he say to Clarence,— "these are the dupes of the same fever as ourselves: like us, they strive, and toil, and vex their little lives for a distinction from their race. Ambition comes to them, as to all; but they throw for a different prize than we do: theirs is the honor of a day, ours is immortality; yet they take the same labor, and are consumed by the same care. And, fools that they are, with their gilded names and their gaudy trappings, they would shrink in disdain from that comparison with us which we, with a juster fastidiousness, blush at this moment to acknowledge."

From these scenes they would rove on, and, both delighting in contrast, enter some squalid and obscure quarter of the city. There, one night, quiet observers of their kind, they paused beside a group congregated together by some common cause of obscene merriment or unholy fellowship,— a group on which low vice had set her sordid and hideous stamp,— to gaze and draw strange humors or a motley moral from that depth and ferment of human nature into whose sink the thousand streams of civilization had poured their dregs and offal.

"You survey these," said the painter, marking each with the curious eye of his profession: "they are a base horde, it is true; but they have their thirst of fame, their aspirations even in the abyss of crime, or the loathsomeness of famished want. Down in yon cellar, where a farthing rushlight glimmers upon haggard cheeks, distorted with the idiocy of drink; there in that foul attic, from whose casement you see the beggar's rags hang to dry, or rather to crumble in the reeking and filthy air; farther on, within those walls which, black

and heavy as the hearts they hide, close our miserable prospect; there, even there, in the mildewed dungeon, in the felon's cell, on the very scaffold self,—Ambition hugs her own hope, or scowls upon her own despair. Yes! the inmates of those walls had their perilous game of honor, their 'hazard of the die,' in which vice was triumph, and infamy success. We do but share their passion, though we direct it to a better object."

Pausing for a moment, as his thoughts flowed into a somewhat different channel of his character, Warner continued, "We have now caught a glimpse of the two great divisions of mankind: they who riot in palaces, and they who make mirth hideous in rags and hovels; own that it is but a poor survey in either. Can we be contemptible with these, or loathsome with those? Or rather have we not a nobler spark within us which we have but to fan into a flame that shall burn forever, when these miserable meteors sink into the corruption from which they rise?"

"But," observed Clarence, "these are the two extremes: the pinnacle of civilization too worn and bare for any more noble and vigorous fruit, and the base upon which the cloud descends in rain and storm. Look to the central portion of society; there the soil is more genial, and its produce more rich."

"Is it so, in truth?" answered Warner; "pardon me, I believe not; the middling classes are as human as the rest. There is the region,—the heart of Avarice,—systematized, spreading, rotting, the very fungus and leprosy of social states; suspicion, craft, hypocrisy, servility to the great, oppression to the low, the waxlike mimicry of courtly vices, the hardness of flint to humble woes; thought, feeling, the faculties and impulses of man, all ulcered into one great canker,—gain;—these

make the general character of the middling class, the unleavened mass of that mediocrity which it has been the wisdom of the shallow to applaud. Pah! *we* too are of this class, this potter's earth, this paltry mixture of mud and stone; but *we*, my friend, we will knead gold into our clay."

"But look," said Clarence, pointing to the group before them, — "look: yon wretched mother, whose voice an instant ago uttered the coarsest accents of maudlin and intoxicated prostitution, is now fostering her infant, with a fondness stamped upon her worn cheek and hollow eye which might shame the nice maternity of nobles; and there, too, yon wretch whom, in the reckless effrontery of hardened abandonment, we ourselves heard a few minutes since boast of his dexterity in theft, and openly exhibit his token, — look, he is now, with a Samaritan's own charity, giving the very goods for which his miserable life was risked to that attenuated and starving stripling! No, Warner, no! even this mass is *not* unleavened. The vilest infamy is not too deep for the Seraph Virtue to descend and illumine its abyss!"

"Out on the weak fools!" said the artist, bitterly: "it would be something, if they could be consistent even in crime!" and, placing his arm in Linden's, he drew him away.

As the picture grew beneath the painter's hand, Clarence was much struck with the outline and expression of countenance given to the regicide Bradshaw.

"They are but an imperfect copy of the living original from whom I have borrowed them," said Warner, in answer to Clarence's remark upon the sternness of the features. "But that original, a relation of mine, is coming here to-day, — you shall see him."

While Warner was yet speaking, the person in ques-

tion entered. His were, indeed, the form and face worthy to be seized by the painter. The peculiarity of his character made him affect a plainness of dress unusual to the day, and approaching to the simplicity, but not the neatness, of Quakerism. His hair — then, with all the better ranks, a principal object of cultivation — was wild, dishevelled, and, in wiry flakes of the sablest hue, rose abruptly from a forehead on which either thought or passion had written its annals with an iron pen; the lower part of the brow, which overhung the eye, was singularly sharp and prominent; while the lines, or rather furrows, traced under the eyes and nostrils, spoke somewhat of exhaustion and internal fatigue. But this expression was contrasted and contradicted by the firmly-compressed lip; the lighted, steady, stern eye; the resolute and even stubborn front, joined to proportions strikingly athletic, and a stature of uncommon height.

"Well, Wolfe," said the young painter to the person we have described, "it is indeed a kindness to give me a second sitting."

"Tush, boy!" answered Wolfe: "all men have their vain points, and I own that I am not ill pleased that these rugged features should be assigned, even in fancy, to one of the noblest of those men who judged the mightiest cause in which a country was ever plaintiff, a tyrant criminal, and a world witness!"

While Wolfe was yet speaking, his countenance, so naturally harsh, took a yet sterner aspect, and the artist, by a happy touch, succeeded in transferring it to the canvas.

"But, after all," continued Wolfe, "it shames me to lend aid to an art frivolous in itself, and almost culpable in times when Freedom wants the head to design, and, perhaps, the hand to execute far other and nobler works

than the blazoning of her past deeds upon perishable canvas."

A momentary anger at the slight put upon his art crossed the pale brow of the artist; but he remembered the character of the man, and continued his work in silence.

"You consider then, sir, that these are times in which liberty is attacked?" said Clarence.

"Attacked?" repeated Wolfe, — "attacked!" and then suddenly sinking his voice into a sort of sneer; "why, since the event which this painting is designed to commemorate, — I know not if we have ever had one solitary gleam of liberty break along the great chaos of jarring prejudice and barbarous law which we term, forsooth, a glorious constitution. Liberty attacked! no, boy, — but it is a time when liberty may be gained."

Perfectly unacquainted with the excited politics of the day, or the growing and mighty spirit which then stirred through the minds of men, Clarence remained silent; but his evident attention flattered the fierce republican, and he proceeded.

"Ay," he said slowly, and as if drinking in a deep and stern joy from his conviction in the truth of the words he uttered, — "ay, I have wandered over the face of the earth, and I have warmed my soul at the fires which lay hidden under its quiet surface; I have been in the city and the desert, — the herded and banded crimes of the Old World, and the scattered, but bold hearts which are found among the savannahs of the New, — and in either I have beheld that seed sown, which, from a mustard-grain too scanty for a bird's beak, shall grow up to be a shelter and a home for the whole family of man. I have looked upon the thrones of kings, and lo! the anointed ones were in purple and festive pomp; and

I looked *beneath* the thrones, and I saw want and hunger and despairing wrath gnawing the foundations away. I have stood in the streets of that great city where mirth seems to hold an eternal jubilee, and beheld the noble riot while the peasant starved; and the priest build altars to Mammon, piled from the earnings of groaning labor, and cemented with blood and tears. But I looked farther, and saw, in the rear, chains sharpened into swords, misery ripening into justice, and famine darkening into revenge; and I laughed as I beheld, for I knew that the day of the oppressed was at hand."

Somewhat awed by the prophetic tone, though revolted by what seemed to him the novelty and the fierceness, of the sentiments of the republican, Clarence, after a brief pause, said, —

"And what of our own country?"

Wolfe's brow darkened. "The oppression here," said he, "has not been so weighty, therefore the reaction will be less strong; the parties are more blended, therefore their separation will be more arduous; the extortion is less strained, therefore the endurance will be more meek; but, soon or late, the struggle must come: bloody will it be, if the strife be even; gentle and lasting, if the people predominate."

"And if the rulers be the strongest?" said Clarence.

"The struggle will be renewed," replied Wolfe, doggedly.

"You still attend those oratorical meetings, cousin, I think?" said Warner.

"I do," said Wolfe; "and if you are not so utterly absorbed in your vain and idle art as to be indifferent to all things nobler, you will learn yourself to take interest in what concerns, — I will not say your country,

but — mankind. For you, young man ” (and the republican turned to Clarence), “ I would fain hope that life has not already been diverted from the greatest of human objects; if so, come to-morrow night to our assembly, and learn from worthier lips than mine the precepts and the hopes for which good men live or die.”

“ I will come at all events to listen, if not to learn,” said Clarence, eagerly, for his curiosity was excited. And the republican, having now fulfilled the end of his visit, rose and departed.

CHAPTER XV.

Bound to suffer persecution
And martyrdom with resolution,
T' oppose *himself* against the hate
And vengeance of the incensed state.

Hudibras.

BORN of respectable though not wealthy parents, John Wolfe was one of those fiery and daring spirits which, previous to some mighty revolution, fate seems to scatter over various parts of the earth, even those removed from the predestined explosion: heralds of the events in which they are fitted, though not fated, to be actors. The period at which he is presented to the reader was one considerably prior to that French Revolution so much debated and so little understood. But some such event, though not foreseen by the common, had been already foreboded by the more enlightened eye; and Wolfe, from a protracted residence in France, among the most discontented of its freer spirits, had brought hope to that burning enthusiasm which had long made the pervading passion of his existence.

Bold to ferocity, generous in devotion to folly in self-sacrifice, unflinching in his tenets to a degree which rendered their ardor ineffectual to all times, because utterly inapplicable to the present, Wolfe was one of those zealots whose very virtues have the semblance of vice, and whose very capacities for danger become harmless from the rashness of their excess.

It was not among the philosophers and reasoners of France that Wolfe had drawn strength to his opinions:

whatever such companions might have done to his tenets, they would at least have moderated his actions. The philosopher may aid or expedite a change, but never does the philosopher in any age or of any sect countenance a crime. But of philosophers Wolfe knew little, and probably despised them for their temperance: it was among fanatics, ignorant but imaginative, that he had strengthened the love without comprehending the nature of republicanism. Like Lucian's painter, whose flattery portrayed the one-eyed prince in profile, he viewed only that side of the question in which there was no defect, and gave beauty to the whole by concealing the half. Thus, though on his return to England herding with the common class of his reforming brethren, Wolfe possessed many peculiarities and distinctions of character which, in rendering him strikingly adapted to the purpose of the novelist, must serve as a caution to the reader not to judge of the class by the individual.

With a *class* of republicans in England there was a strong tendency to support their cause by reasoning. With Wolfe, whose mind was little wedded to logic, all was the offspring of turbulent feelings, which, in rejecting argument, substituted declamation for syllogism. This effected a powerful and irreconcilable distinction between Wolfe and the better part of his comrades; for the habits of cool reasoning, whether true or false, are little likely to bias the mind towards those crimes to which Wolfe's irregular emotions might possibly urge him, and give to the characters to which they are a sort of common denominator something of method and much of similarity. But the feelings—those orators which allow no calculation, and baffle the tameness of comparison—rendered Wolfe alone, unique, eccentric in opinion or action, whether of vice or virtue.

Private ties frequently moderate the ardor of our public enthusiasm. Wolfe had none. His nearest relation was Warner, and it may readily be supposed that with the pensive and contemplative artist he had very little in common. He had never married, nor had ever seemed to wander from his stern and sterile path in the most transient pursuit of the pleasures of sense. Inflexibly honest, rigidly austere,—in his moral character his bitterest enemies could detect no flaw, — poor, even to indigence, he had invariably refused all overtures of the government; thrice imprisoned and heavily fined for his doctrines, no fear of a future, no remembrance of the past punishment could ever silence his bitter eloquence or moderate the passion of his distempered zeal; kindly, though rude, his scanty means were ever shared by the less honest and disinterested followers of his faith; and he had been known for days to deprive himself of food, and for nights of shelter, for the purpose of yielding food and shelter to another.

Such was the man doomed to forsake, through a long and wasted life, every substantial blessing, in pursuit of a shadowy good; with the warmest benevolence in his heart, to relinquish private affections, and to brood even to madness over public offences, — to sacrifice everything, in a generous though erring devotion, for that freedom whose cause, instead of promoting, he was calculated to retard; and, while he believed himself the martyr of a high and uncompromising virtue, to close his career with the greatest of human crimes.

CHAPTER XVI.

Faith, methinks his humor is good, and his purse will buy good company. — *The Parson's Wedding.*

WHEN Clarence returned home, after the conversation recorded in our last chapter, he found a note from Talbot, inviting him to meet some friends of the latter at supper that evening. It was the first time Clarence had been asked, and he looked forward with some curiosity and impatience to the hour appointed in the note.

It is impossible to convey any idea of the jealous rancor felt by Mr. and Mrs. Copperas on hearing of this distinction, — a distinction which "the perfect courtier" had never once bestowed upon themselves.

Mrs. Copperas tossed her head, too indignant for words; and the stock-jobber, in the bitterness of his soul, affirmed, with a meaning air, "that he dared say, after all, that the old gentleman was not so rich as he gave out."

On entering Talbot's drawing-room, Clarence found about seven or eight people assembled: their names, in proclaiming the nature of the party, indicated that the aim of the host was to combine aristocracy and talent. The literary acquirements and worldly tact of Talbot, joined to the adventitious circumstances of birth and fortune, enabled him to effect this object, so desirable in polished society, far better than we generally find it effected now. The conversation of these guests was light and various. The last *bon mot* of Chesterfield, the last sarcasm of Horace Walpole, Goldsmith's "Trav-

eller," Shenstone's "Pastorals," and the attempt of Mrs. Montagu to bring Shakespeare into fashion, — in all these subjects the graceful wit and exquisite taste of Talbot shone pre-eminent; and he had almost succeeded in convincing a profound critic that Gray was a poet more likely to live than Mason, when the servant announced supper.

That was the age for suppers! Happy age! Meal of ease and mirth; when wine and night lit the lamp of wit! Oh, what precious things were said and looked at those banquets of the soul! There, epicurism was in the lip as well as the palate, and one had humor for a *hors d'œuvre*, and repartee for an *entremet*. In dinner there is something too pompous, too formal, for the true ease of table talk. One's intellectual appetite, like the physical, is coarse but dull. At dinner one is fit only for eating; *after* dinner only for politics. But supper was a glorious relic of the ancients. The bustle of the day had thoroughly wound up the spirit, and every stroke upon the dial-plate of wit was true to the genius of the hour. The wallet of diurnal anecdote was full, and craved unloading. The great meal — that vulgar first love of the appetite — was over, and one now only flattered it into coquetting with another. The mind, disengaged and free, was no longer absorbed in a cutlet or burdened with a joint. The *gourmand* carried the nicety of his physical perception to his moral, and applauded a *bon mot* instead of a *bonne bouche*.

Then, too, one had no necessity to keep a reserve of thought for the after evening; supper was the final consummation, the glorious funeral pyre of the day. One could be merry till bed-time without an interregnum. Nay, if in the ardor of convivialism one did, — I merely

hint at the possibility of such an event, — if one *did* exceed the narrow limits of strict ebriety, and open the heart with a ruby key, one had nothing to dread from the cold, or, what is worse, the warm looks of ladies in the drawing-room; no fear that an imprudent word, in the amatory fondness of the fermented blood, might expose one to matrimony and settlements. There was no tame trite medium of propriety and suppressed confidence, no bridge from board to bed, over which a false step (and your wine cup is a marvellous corruptor of ambulatory rectitude) might precipitate into an irrecoverable abyss of perilous communication or unwholesome truth. One's pillow became at once the legitimate and natural bourn to "the overheated brain;" and the generous rashness of the conatorial reveller was not damped by untimorous caution or ignoble calculation.

But "we have changed all that now:" sobriety has become the successor of suppers; the great ocean of moral encroachment has not left us one little island of refuge. Miserable supper-lovers that we are, like the native Indians of America, a scattered and daily disappearing race, we wander among strange customs, and behold the innovating and invading dinner spread gradually over the very space of time in which the majesty of supper once reigned undisputed and supreme!

"O ye heavens, be kind,
And feel, thou earth, for this afflicted race."¹

As he was sitting down to the table, Clarence's notice was arrested by a somewhat suspicious and displeasing occurrence. The supper room was on the ground floor, and, owing to the heat of the weather, one of the windows facing the small garden, was left open. Through

¹ Wordsworth.

this window Clarence distinctly saw the face of a man look into the room for one instant, with a prying and curious gaze, and then as instantly disappear. As no one else seemed to remark this incident, and the general attention was somewhat noisily engrossed by the subject of conversation, Clarence thought it not worth while to mention a circumstance for which the impertinence of any neighboring servant or drunken passer-by might easily account. An apprehension, however, of a more unpleasant nature shot across him, as his eye fell upon the costly plate which Talbot rather ostentatiously displayed, and then glanced to the single and aged servant, who was, besides his master, the only male inmate of the house. Nor could he help saying to Talbot, in the course of the evening, that he wondered he was not afraid of hoarding so many articles of value in a house at once lonely and ill-guarded.

"Ill-guarded!" said Talbot, rather affronted, "why, I and my servant always sleep here!"

To this Clarence thought it neither prudent nor well-bred to offer further remark.

CHAPTER XVII.

Meetings, or public calls, he never missed,
To dictate often, always to assist.

To his experience and his native sense,
He joined a bold, imperious eloquence ;
The grave, stern look of men informed and wise,
A full command of feature, heart, and eyes,
An awe-compelling frown, and fear-inspiring size.

CCRABBE.

THE next evening Clarence, mindful of Wolfe's invitation, inquired from Warner (who repaid the contempt of the republican for the painter's calling by a similar feeling for the zealot's) the direction of the oratorical meeting, and repaired there alone. It was the most celebrated club (of that description) of the day, and well worth attending, as a gratification to the curiosity, if not an improvement to the mind.

On entering, he found himself in a long room, tolerably well lighted, and still better filled. The sleepy countenances of the audience, the whispered conversation carried on at scattered intervals, the listless attitudes of some, the frequent yawns of others, the eagerness with which attention was attracted to the opening door, when it admitted some new object of interest, the desperate resolution with which some of the more energetic turned themselves towards the orator, and then, with a faint shake of the head, turned themselves again hopelessly away, — were all signs that denoted that no very eloquent declaimer was in possession of the

"house." It was, indeed, a singularly dull, monotonous voice which, arising from the upper end of the room, dragged itself on towards the middle, and expired with a sighing sound before it reached the end. The face of the speaker suited his vocal powers: it was small, mean, and of a round stupidity, without anything even in fault that could possibly command attention, or even the excitement of disapprobation; the very garments of the orator seemed dull and heavy, and, like the Melancholy of Milton, had a "leaden look." Now and then some words more emphatic than others, — stones breaking, as it were, with a momentary splash the stagnation of the heavy stream, — produced from three very quiet, unhappy-looking persons, seated next to the speaker, his immediate friends, three single insolated "hears!"

The force of friendship could no further go.

At last the orator having *spoken through*, suddenly stopped; the whole meeting seemed as if a weight had been taken from it; there was a general buzz of awakened energy, each stretched his limbs, and resettled himself in his place,

And turning to his neighbor, said, "Rejoice!"

A pause ensued; the chairman looked round, — the eyes of the meeting followed those of their president, with a universal and palpable impatience, towards an obscure corner of the room: the pause deepened for one moment, and then was broken; a voice cried "Wolfe!" and at that signal the whole room shook with the name. The place which Clarence had taken did not allow him to see the object of these cries till he rose from his situation, and, passing two rows of benches, stood forth in

the middle space of the room; then, from one to one, went round the general roar of applause; feet stamped, hands clapped, umbrellas set their sharp points to the ground, and walking-sticks thumped themselves out of shape in the universal clamor. Tall, gaunt, and erect, the speaker possessed, even in the mere proportions of his frame, that physical power which never fails, in a popular assembly, to gain attention to mediocrity, and to throw dignity over faults. He looked very slowly round the room, remaining perfectly still and motionless, till the clamor of applause had entirely subsided, and every ear, Clarence's no less eagerly than the rest, was strained, and thirsting to catch the first syllables of his voice.

It was then with a low, very deep, and somewhat hoarse tone that he began; and it was not till he had spoken for several minutes that the iron expression of his face altered, that the drooping hand was raised, and that the suppressed, yet powerful voice began to expand and vary in its volume. He had then entered upon a new department of his subject. The question was connected with the English constitution, and Wolfe was now preparing to put forth, in long and blackened array, the alleged evils of an aristocratical form of government. *Then* it was as if the bile and bitterness of years were poured forth in a terrible and stormy wrath, then his action became vehement, and his eye flashed forth unutterable fire; his voice, solemn, swelling and increasing with each tone in its height and depth, filled, as with something palpable and perceptible, the shaking walls. The listeners,—a various and unconnected group, bound by no tie of faith or of party, many attracted by curiosity, many by the hope of ridicule: some abhorring the tenets expressed, and nearly all disapproving their principles or doubting their wisdom,—the listeners, certainly not

a group previously formed or moulded into enthusiasm, became rapt and earnest, their very breath forsook them.

Linden had never before that night heard a public speaker; but he was of a thoughtful and rather calculating mind, and his early habits of decision, and the premature cultivation of his intellect, rendered him little susceptible, in general, to the impressions of the vulgar; nevertheless, in spite of himself, he was hurried away by the stream, and found that the force and rapidity of the speaker did not allow him even time for the dissent and disapprobation which his republican maxims and fiery denunciations perpetually excited in a mind aristocratic both by creed and education. At length, after a peroration of impetuous and magnificent invective, the orator ceased.

In the midst of the applause that followed, Clarence left the assembly; he could not endure the thought that any duller or more commonplace speaker should fritter away the spell which yet bound and engrossed his spirit.

CHAPTER XVIII.

At the bottom of the staircase was a small door, which gave way before Nigel, as he precipitated himself upon the scene of action, a cocked pistol in one hand, etc. — *Fortunes of Nigel*.

THE night, though not utterly dark, was rendered capricious and dim by alternate wind and rain; and Clarence was delayed in his return homeward by seeking occasional shelter from the rapid and heavy showers which hurried by. It was during one of the temporary cessations of the rain that he reached Copperas Bower, and while he was searching in his pockets for the key which was to admit him, he observed two men loitering about his neighbor's house. The light was not sufficient to give him more than a scattered and imperfect view of their motions. Somewhat alarmed, he stood for several moments at the door, watching them as well as he was able; nor did he enter the house till the loiterers had left their suspicious position, and, walking onwards, were hid entirely from him by the distance and darkness.

"It really is a dangerous thing for Talbot," thought Clarence, as he ascended to his apartment, "to keep so many valuables, and only one servant, and that one as old as himself too. However, as I am by no means sleepy, and my room is by no means cool, I may as well open my window, and see if those idle fellows make their reappearance." Suiting the action to the thought Clarence opened his little casement, and leaned wistfully out.

He had no light in his room, for none was ever left for him. This circumstance, however, of course enabled him the better to penetrate the dimness and haze of the night, and, by the help of the fluttering lamps, he was enabled to take a general, though not minute survey of the scene below.

I think I have before said that there was a garden between Talbot's house and Copperas Bower; this was bounded by a wall, which confined Talbot's peculiar territory of garden, and this wall, describing a parallelogram, faced also the road. It contained two entrances, — one the principal adytus, in the shape of a comely iron gate, the other a wooden door, which, being a private pass, fronted the intermediate garden before mentioned, and was exactly opposite to Clarence's window.

Linden had been more than ten minutes at his post, and had just begun to think his suspicions without foundation, and his vigil in vain, when he observed the same figures he had seen before advance slowly from the distance, and pause by the front gate of Talbot's mansion.

Alarmed and anxious, he redoubled his attention; he stretched himself, as far as his safety would permit, out of the window; the lamps, agitated by the wind, which swept by in occasional gusts, refused to grant to his straining sight more than an inaccurate and unsatisfying survey. Presently a blast, more violent than ordinary, suspended as it were the falling columns of rain, and left Clarence in almost total darkness; it rolled away, and the momentary calm which ensued enabled him to see that one of the men was stooping by the gate, and the other standing apparently on the watch at a little distance. Another gust shook the lamps, and again obscured his view: and when it had passed onward in

its rapid course, the men had left the gate, and were in the garden beneath his window. They crept cautiously but swiftly along the opposite wall, till they came to the small door we have before mentioned; here they halted, and one of them appeared to occupy himself in opening the door. Now then, fear was changed into certainty, and it seemed without doubt that the men, having found some difficulty or danger in forcing the stronger or more public entrance, had changed their quarter of attack. No more time was to be lost; Clarence shouted aloud, but the high wind probably prevented the sound reaching the ears of the burglars, or at least rendered it dubious and confused. The next moment, and before Clarence could repeat his alarm, they had opened the door, and were within the neighboring garden, beyond his view. Very young men, unless their experience has outstripped their youth, seldom have much presence of mind; that quality, which is the opposite to *surprise*, comes to us in those years when nothing seems to us strange or unexpected. But a much older man than Clarence might have well been at a loss to know what conduct to adopt in the situation in which our hero was placed. The visits of the watchman to that (then) obscure and ill-inhabited neighborhood, were more regulated by his indolence than his duty, and Clarence knew that it would be in vain to listen for his cry or tarry for his assistance. He himself was utterly unarmed, but the stock-jobber had a pair of horse-pistols, and as this recollection flashed upon him, the pause of deliberation ceased.

With a swift step he descended the first flight of stairs, and pausing at the chamber door of the faithful couple, knocked upon its panels with a loud and hasty summons. The second repetition of the noise produced the sen-

tence, uttered in a very trembling voice, of "Who's there?"

"It is I, Clarence Linden," replied our hero; "lose no time in opening the door."

This answer seemed to re-assure the valorous stock-jobber. He slowly undid the bolt and turned the key.

"In Heaven's name, what do you want, Mr. Linden?" said he.

"Ay," cried a sharp voice from the more internal recesses of the chamber, "what do you want, sir, disturbing us in the bosom of our family, and at the dead of night?"

With a rapid voice, Clarence repeated what he had seen, and requested the broker to accompany him to Talbot's house, or at least to lend him his pistols.

"He shall do no such thing," cried Mrs. Copperas. "Come here, Mr. C., and shut the door directly."

"Stop, my love," said the stock-jobber, "stop a moment."

"For God's sake," cried Clarence, "make no delay; the poor old man may be murdered by this time."

"It's no business of mine," said the stock-jobber. "If Adolphus had not broken the rattle I would not have minded the trouble of springing it; but you are very much mistaken if you think I am going to leave my warm bed in order to have my throat cut."

"Then give me your pistols," cried Clarence; "I will go alone."

"I shall commit no such folly," said the stock-jobber; "if you are murdered, I may have to answer it to your friends, and pay for your burial. Besides, you owe us for your lodgings, — go to your bed, young man, as I shall to mine." And so saying, Mr. Copperas proceeded to close the door.

But enraged at the brutality of the man, and excited by the urgency of the case, Clarence did not allow him so peaceable a retreat. With a strong and fierce grasp, he seized the astonished Copperas by the throat, and shaking him violently, forced his own entrance into the sacred nuptial chamber.

"By Heaven," cried Linden, in a savage and stern tone, for his blood was up, "I will twist your coward's throat, and save the murderer his labor, if you do not instantly give me up your pistols."

The stock-jobber was panic-stricken. "Take them," he cried in the extremest terror; "there they are on the chimney-piece, close by."

"Are they primed and loaded?" said Linden, not relaxing his gripe.

"Yes, yes!" said the stock-jobber, "loose my throat, or you will choke me!" and, at that instant, Clarence felt himself clasped by the invading hands of Mrs. Copperas.

"Call off your wife," said he, "or I *will* choke you!" and he tightened his hold, "and tell her to give me the pistols."

The next moment Mrs. Copperas extended the debated weapons towards Clarence. He seized them, flung the poor stock-jobber against the bed-post, hurried downstairs, opened the back door, which led into the garden, flew across the intervening space, arrived at the door, and entering Talbot's garden, paused to consider what was the next step to be taken.

A person equally brave as Clarence, but more cautious, would not have left the house without alarming Mr. de Warens, even in spite of the failure of his master; but Linden only thought of the pressure of time, and the necessity of expedition, and he would have been a

very unworthy hero of romance had he felt fear for two antagonists, with a brace of pistols at his command, and a high and good action in view.

After a brief but decisive halt, he proceeded rapidly round the house, in order to ascertain at which part the ruffians had admitted themselves, should they (as indeed there was little doubt) have already effected their entrance.

He found the shutters of one of the principal rooms on the ground floor had been opened, and through the aperture he caught the glimpse of a moving light, which was suddenly obscured. As he was about to enter, the light again flashed out; he drew back just in time, carefully screened himself behind the shutter, and through one of the chinks observed what passed within. Opposite to the window was a door which conducted to the hall and principal staircase; this door was open, and in the hall, at the foot of the stairs, Clarence saw two men; one carried a dark lantern from which the light proceeded, and some tools, of the nature of which Clarence was naturally ignorant: this was a middle-sized muscular man, dressed in the rudest garb of an ordinary laborer; the other was much taller and younger, and his dress was of rather a less ignoble fashion.

"Hist! hist!" said the taller one, in a low tone, "did you not hear a noise, Ben?"

"Not a pin fall; but stow your whids man!"

This was all that Clarence heard in a connected form; but as the wretches paused in evident doubt how to proceed, he caught two or three detached words, which his ingenuity readily formed into sentences. "No, no! sleeps to the left — old man above — plate-chest — we must have the blunt too. Come, track up the dancers, and dowse the glim." And at the last words the light

was extinguished, and Clarence's quick and thirsting ear just caught their first steps on the stairs; they died away, and all was hushed.

It had several times occurred to Clarence to rush from his hiding-place and fire at the ruffians: and perhaps that measure would have been the wisest he could have taken; but Clarence had never discharged a pistol in his life, and he felt, therefore, that his aim must be uncertain enough to render a favorable position and a short distance essential requisites. Both these were at present denied to him; and although he saw no weapons about the persons of the villains, yet he imagined they would not have ventured on so dangerous an expedition without fire-arms; and if he failed, as would have been most probable in his two shots, he concluded that though the alarm would be given, his own fate would be inevitable.

If this was reasoning upon false premises, — for house-breakers seldom or never carry loaded fire-arms, and never stay for revenge when their safety demands escape, — Clarence may be forgiven for not knowing the customs of house-breakers, and for not making the very best of an extremely novel and dangerous situation.

No sooner did he find himself in total darkness, than he bitterly reproached himself for his late backwardness; and inwardly resolving not again to miss any opportunity which presented itself, he entered the window, groped along the room into the hall, and found his way very slowly, and after much circumlocution, to the staircase.

He had just gained the summit when a loud cry broke upon the stillness: it came from a distance, and was instantly hushed; but he caught at brief intervals the sound of angry and threatening voices. Clarence bent

down anxiously, in the hope that some solitary ray would escape through the crevice of the door within which the robbers were engaged. But though the sounds came from the same floor as that on which he now trod, they seemed far and remote, and not a gleam of light broke the darkness.

He continued, however, to feel his way in the direction from which the sounds proceeded, and soon found himself in a narrow gallery; the voices seemed more loud and near as he advanced; at last he distinctly heard the words,—

“Will you not confess where it is placed?”

“Indeed, indeed,” replied an eager and earnest voice, which Clarence recognized as Talbot’s, “this is all the money I have in the house; the plate is above: my servant has the key, take it—take all—but save his life and mine.”

“None of your gammon,” said another and rougher voice than that of the first speaker: “we know you have more blunt than this,—a paltry sum of fifty pounds, indeed!”

“Hold!” cried the other ruffian, “here is a picture set with diamonds, that will do, Ben. Let go the old man.”

Clarence was now just at hand, and, probably from a sudden change in the position of the dark lantern within, a light abruptly broke from beneath the door, and streamed along the passage. “No, no, no!” cried the old man, in a loud yet tremulous voice,—“no, not that, anything else, but I will defend *that* with my life.”

“Ben, my lad,” said the ruffian, “twist the old fool’s neck: we have no more time to lose.”

At that very moment the door was flung violently open, and Clarence Linden stood within three paces of

the reprobates and their prey. The taller villain had a miniature in his hand, and the old man clung to his legs with a convulsive but impotent clasp; the other fellow had already his gripe upon Talbot's neck, and his right hand grasped a long case-knife.

With a fierce and flashing eye, and a cheek deadly pale with internal and resolute excitement, Clarence confronted the robbers.

"Thank Heaven," cried he, "I am not too late!" And, advancing yet another step towards the shorter ruffian, who, struck mute with the suddenness of the apparition, still retained his grasp of the old man, he fired his pistol with a steady and close aim; the ball penetrated the wretch's brain, and, without sound or sigh, he fell down dead at the very feet of his just destroyer. The remaining robber had already meditated, and a second more sufficed to accomplish, his escape. He sprang towards the door; the ball whizzed beside him, but touched him not. With a safe and swift step, long inured to darkness, he fled along the passage; and Linden, satisfied with the vengeance he had taken upon his comrade, did not harass him with an unavailing pursuit.

Clarence turned to assist Talbot. The old man was stretched upon the floor insensible, but his hand grasped the miniature which the plunderer had dropped in his flight and terror, and his white and ashen lip was pressed convulsively upon the recovered treasure.

Linden raised and placed him on his bed, and while employed in attempting to revive him, the ancient domestic, alarmed by the report of the pistol, came, poker in hand, to his assistance.

By little and little they recovered the object of their attention.

His eyes rolled wildly round the room, and he muttered, —

“ Off, off! ye shall not rob me of my only relic of her, — where is it? — have you got it? — the picture, the picture!”

“ It is here, sir, it is here,” said the old servant; “ it is in your own hand.”

Talbot's eye fell upon it; he gazed at it for some moments, pressed it to his lips, and then, sitting erect, and looking wildly round, he seemed to awaken to the sense of his late danger and his present deliverance.

CHAPTER XIX.

Ah, fleeter far than fleetest storm or steed,
Or the death they bear,
The heart which tender thought clothes like a dove,
With the wings of care !
In the battle, in the darkness, in the need,
Shall mine cling to thee !
Nor claim one smile for all the comfort, love,
It may bring to thee !

SHELLEY.

LETTER FROM ALGERNON MORDAUNT TO ISABEL ST.
LEGER.

You told me not to write to you. You know how long, but not how uselessly I have obeyed you. Did you think, Isabel, that my love was of that worldly and common order which requires a perpetual aliment to support it ? Did you think that if you forbade the stream to flow visibly its sources would be exhausted and its channel dried up ? This may be the passion of others ; it is not mine. Months have passed since we parted, and since then you have not seen me : this letter is the first token you have received from a remembrance which cannot die. But do you think that I have not watched and tended upon you, and gladdened my eyes with gazing on your beauty when you have not dreamed that I was by ? Ah, Isabel, your heart should have told you of it, — *mine* would had *you* been so near me !

You receive no letters from me, it is true, — think you that my hand and heart are therefore idle ? No. I write to you a thousand burning lines ; I pour out my soul to you ; I tell you of all I suffer ; my thoughts, my actions, my very dreams, are all traced upon the paper. I send them not to you, but I read them over and over, and when I come to your name I

pause, and shut my eyes, and then "Fancy has her power," and, lo! "you are by my side!"

Isabel, our love has not been a holiday and joyous sentiment; but I feel a solemn and unalterable conviction that our union is ordained.

Others have many objects to distract and occupy the thoughts which are once forbidden a single direction, but we have *none*. At least, to me you are everything. Pleasure, splendor, ambition, — all are merged into one great and eternal thought, and that is *you*!

Others have told me, and I believed them, that I was hard, and cold, and stern, — so, perhaps, I was before I knew you, but now I am weaker and softer than a child. There is a stone which is of all the hardest and the chilliest, but when once set on fire it is unquenchable. You smile at my image perhaps, and I should smile if I saw it in the writing of another; for all that I have ridiculed in romance as exaggerated, seems now to me too cool and too commonplace for reality.

But this is not what I meant to write to you; you are ill, dearest and noblest Isabel, you are ill! I am the cause, and you conceal it from me; and you would rather pine away and die than suffer *me* to lose one of those worldly advantages which are in *my* eyes but as dust in the balance, — it is in vain to deny it. I heard from others of your impaired health; I have witnessed it myself. Do you remember, last night, when you were in the room with your relations, and they made you sing, — a song, too, which you used to sing to me, — and when you came to the second stanza your voice failed you, and you burst into tears, and *they*, instead of soothing, reproached and chid you, and you answered not, but wept on? Isabel, do you remember that a sound was heard at the window, and a groan! Even they were startled, but they thought it was the wind; for the night was dark and stormy, and they saw not that it was *I*, — yes, my devoted, my generous love, it was I who gazed upon you, and from whose heart that voice of anguish was wrung; and I saw your cheek was pale and thin, and that the canker at the core had preyed upon the blossom.

Think you, after this, that I could keep silence or obey your request? No, dearest, no! Is not my happiness your object? I have the vanity to believe so; and am *I* not the best judge how that happiness is to be secured! I tell you, I say it calmly, coldly, dispassionately, — not from the imagination, not even from the heart, but solely from the *reason*, — that I can bear everything rather than the loss of *you*; and that if the evil of my love scathe and destroy you, I shall consider and curse myself as your murderer! Save me from this extreme of misery, my — yes, *my* Isabel! I shall be at the copse, where we have so often met before, to-morrow, at noon. You will meet me; and if I cannot *convince* you, I will not ask you to be *persuaded*.

A. M.

And Isabel read this letter, and placed it at her heart, and felt less miserable than she had done for months; for, though she wept, there was sweetness in the tears which the assurance of *his* love, and the tenderness of his remonstrance, had called forth. She met him, — how could she refuse? — and the struggle was past. Though not “convinced,” she *was* “persuaded;” for her heart, which refused his reasonings, melted at his reproaches and his grief. But she would not consent to unite her fate with him at once, for the evils of that step to his interests were immediate and near; she was only persuaded to permit their correspondence and occasional meetings, in which, however imprudent they might be for herself, the disadvantages to her lover were distant and remote. It was of him only that she thought, for him she trembled; for him she was the coward and the woman: for herself she had no fears, and no forethought.

And Algernon was worthy of this devoted love, and returned it as it was given. Man’s love, in general, is a selfish and exacting sentiment: it demands every

sacrifice, and refuses all. But the nature of Mordaunt was essentially high and disinterested, and his honor, like his love, was not that of the world: it was the ethereal and spotless honor of a lofty and generous mind, the honor which custom can neither give nor take away; and, however impatiently he bore the deferring of a union in which he deemed that *he* was the only sufferer, he would not have uttered a sigh or urged a prayer for that union, could it, in the minutest or remotest degree, have injured or degraded *her*.

These are the hearts and natures which make life beautiful; these are the shrines which sanctify love; these are the diviner spirits for whom there is kindred and commune with everything exalted and holy in heaven and earth. For them nature unfolds her hoarded poetry, and her hidden spells; for their steps are the lonely mountains, and the still woods have a murmur for their ears; for them there is strange music in the wave, and in the whispers of the light leaves, and rapture in the voices of the birds; their souls drink, and are saturated with the mysteries of the Universal Spirit, which the philosophy of old times believed to be God himself. They look upon the sky with a gifted vision, and its dove-like quiet descends and overshadows their hearts: the moon and the night are to them wells of Castalian inspiration and golden dreams; and it was one of *them*, who, gazing upon the evening star, felt in the inmost sanctuary of his soul its mysterious harmonies with his most worshipped hope, his most passionate desire, and dedicated it to — LOVE.

CHAPTER XX.

Maria. Here's the brave old man's love,

Bianca. That loves the young man.

The Woman's Prize; or, the Tamer Tamed.

"No, my dear Clarence, you have placed confidence in me, and it is now my duty to return it; you have told me your history and origin, and I will inform you of mine, but not yet. At present we will talk of you. You have conferred upon me what our universal love of life makes us regard as the greatest of human obligations; and though I can bear a large burden of gratitude, yet I must throw off an atom or two, in using my little power in *your* behalf. Nor is this all: your history has also given you another tie upon my heart, and in granting you a *legitimate* title to my good offices, removes any scruple you might otherwise have had in accepting them.

"I have just received this letter from Lord —, the minister for foreign affairs: you will see that he has appointed you to the office of *attaché* at —. You will also oblige me by looking over this other letter at your earliest convenience; the trifling sum which it contains will be repeated every quarter: it will do very well for an *attaché*, — when you are an ambassador, why, we must equip you by a mortgage on Scarsdale; and now, my dear Clarence, tell me all about the Copperases."

I need not say who was the speaker of the above sentences, — sentences, apparently of a very agreeable

nature; nevertheless, Clarence seemed to think otherwise, for the tears gushed into his eyes, and he was unable for several moments to reply.

"Come, my young friend," said Talbot, kindly; "I have no near relations among whom I can choose a son I like better than you, nor you any at present from whom you might select a more desirable father; consequently, you must let me look upon you as my own flesh and blood; and as I intend to be a very strict and peremptory father, I expect the most silent and scrupulous obedience to my commands. My first parental order to you is to put up those papers, and to say nothing more about them; for I have a great deal to talk to you about upon other subjects."

And by these and similar kind-hearted and delicate remonstrances, the old man gained his point. From that moment Clarence looked upon him with the grateful and venerating love of a son; and I question very much if Talbot had really been the father of our hero, whether he would have liked so handsome a successor half so well.

The day after this arrangement, Clarence paid his debt to the Copperases, and removed to Talbot's house. With this event commenced a new era in his existence: he was no longer an outcast and a wanderer; out of alien ties he had wrought the link of a close and even paternal friendship; life, brilliant in its prospects, and elevated in its ascent, opened flatteringly before him; and the fortune and courage which had so well provided for the present were the best omens and auguries for the future.

One evening, when the opening autumn had made its approaches felt, and Linden and his new parent were seated alone by a blazing fire, and had come to a full pause in their conversation, Talbot, shading his face

with the friendly pages of the "Whitehall Evening Paper," as if to protect it from the heat, said, —

"I told you, the other day, that I would give you, at some early opportunity, a brief sketch of my life. This confidence is due to you in return for yours; and since you will soon leave me, and I am an old man whose life no prudent calculation can fix, I may as well choose the present time to favor you with my confessions."

Clarence expressed and looked his interest, and the old man thus commenced: —

THE HISTORY OF A VAIN MAN.

"I was the favorite of my parents, for I was quick at my lessons, and my father said I inherited my genius from him; and comely in my person, and my mother said that my good looks came from her. So the honest pair saw in their eldest son the union of their own attractions, and thought they were making much of themselves when they lavished their caresses upon me. They had another son: poor Arthur, — I think I see him now! He was a shy, quiet, subdued boy, of a very plain personal appearance. My father and mother were vain, showy, ambitious people of the world, and they were as ashamed of my brother as they were proud of myself. However, he afterwards entered the army and distinguished himself highly. He died in battle, leaving an only daughter, who married, *as you know*, a nobleman of high rank. Her subsequent fate it is now needless to relate.

"Petted and pampered from my childhood, I grew up with a profound belief in my own excellences, and a feverish and irritating desire to impress every one who came in my way with the same idea. There is a sen-

tence in Sir William Temple which I have often thought of with a painful conviction of its truth: 'A restlessness in men's minds to be something they are not, and to have something they have not, is the root of all immorality.'¹ At school, I was confessedly the cleverest boy in my remove; and, what I valued equally as much, I was the best cricketer of the best eleven. Here, then, you will say my vanity was satisfied,—no such thing! There was a boy who shared my room, and was next me in the school; we were therefore always thrown together. He was a great, stupid, lubberly cub, equally ridiculed by the masters, and disliked by the boys; will you believe that this individual was the express and almost sole object of my envy? He was more than my rival,—he was my superior; and I hated him with all the unleavened bitterness of my soul.

"I have said he was my superior,—it was in one thing. He could balance a stick, nay, a cricket-bat, a poker, upon his chin, and I could not. You laugh, and so can I now; but it was no subject of laughter to me then. This circumstance, trifling as it may appear to you, poisoned my enjoyment. The boy saw my envy, for I could not conceal it; and as all fools are malicious, and most fools ostentatious, he took a particular pride and pleasure in displaying his dexterity, and 'showing off' my discontent. You can form no idea of the extent to which this petty insolence vexed and disquieted me. Even in my sleep, the clumsy and grinning features of this tormenting imp haunted me like a spectre; my visions were nothing but chins and cricket-bats,—walking-sticks sustaining themselves upon human excrescences, and pokers dancing a hornpipe upon the tip of a nose. I assure you that I have spent hours

¹ And of all good. — AUTHOR.

in secret seclusion, practising to rival my hated comrade, and my face — see how one vanity quarrels with another — was little better than a map of bruises and discolorations.

“I actually became so uncomfortable as to write home, and request to leave the school. I was then about sixteen, and my indulgent father, in granting my desire, told me that I was too old and too advanced in my learning to go to any other academic establishment than the university. The day before I left the school, I gave, as was usually the custom, a breakfast to all my friends; the circumstance of my tormentor’s sharing my room obliged me to invite him among the rest. However, I was in high spirits, and, being a universal favorite with my schoolfellows, I succeeded in what was always to me an object of social ambition, and set the table in a roar; yet, when our festival was nearly expired, and I began to allude more particularly to my approaching departure, my vanity was far more gratified, for my feelings were far more touched, by observing the regret, and receiving the good wishes, of all my companions. I still recall that hour as one of the proudest and happiest of my life; but it had its immediate reverse. My evil demon put it into my tormentor’s head to give me one last parting pang of jealousy. A large umbrella happened accidentally to be in my room: Crompton — such was my school-fellow’s name — saw and seized it: ‘Look, Talbot,’ said he, with his taunting and hideous sneer, ‘you can’t do this;’ and placing the point of the umbrella upon his forehead, just above the eyebrow, he performed various antics round the room.

“At that moment I was standing by the fireplace, and conversing with two boys upon whom, above all others, I wished to leave a favorable impression. My foolish

soreness on this one subject had been often remarked, and as I turned, in abrupt and awkward discomposure, from the exhibition, I observed my two schoolfellows smile and exchange looks. I am not naturally passionate, and even at that age I had, in ordinary cases, great self-command; but this observation, and the cause which led to it, threw me off my guard. Whenever we are utterly under the command of one feeling, we cannot be said to have our reason: at that instant I literally believe I was beside myself. What! in the very flush of the last triumph that that scene would ever afford me; amidst the last regrets of my early friends, to whom I fondly hoped to bequeath a long and brilliant remembrance, to be thus bearded by a contemptible rival, and triumphed over by a pitiful, yet insulting, superiority; to close my condolences with laughter; to have the final solemnity of my career thus terminating in mockery, and ridicule substituted as an ultimate reminiscence in the place of an admiring regret, — all this, too, to be effected by one so long hated, one whom I was the only being forbidden the comparative happiness of despising, — I could not brook it; the insult, — the insulter were too revolting. As the unhappy buffoon approached me, thrusting his distorted face towards mine, I seized and pushed him aside, with a brief curse and a violent hand. The sharp point of the umbrella slipped; my action gave it impetus and weight; it penetrated his eye, and — spare me, spare me the rest.”¹

The old man bent down, and paused for a few moments before he resumed.

“Crompton lost his eye, but my punishment was as severe as his. People who are very vain are usually

¹ This instance of vanity, and indeed the whole of Talbot's history, is literally from facts.

equally susceptible, and they who feel one thing acutely will so feel another. For years, ay, for many years afterwards, the recollection of my folly goaded me with the bitterest and most unceasing remorse. Had I committed murder, my conscience could scarce have afflicted me more severely. I did not regain my self-esteem till I had somewhat repaired the injury I had done. Long after that time, Crompton was in prison, in great and overwhelming distress. I impoverished myself to release him; I sustained him and his family till fortune rendered my assistance no longer necessary; and no triumphs were ever more sweet to me than the sacrifices I was forced to submit to, in order to restore him to prosperity.

"It is natural to hope that this accident had at least the effect of curing me of my fault; but it requires philosophy in yourself, or your advisers, to render remorse of future avail. How could I amend my fault, when I was not even aware of it? Smarting under the effects, I investigated not the cause, and I attributed to irascibility and vindictiveness what had a deeper and more dangerous origin.

"At college, in spite of all my advantages of birth, fortune, health, and intellectual acquirements, I had many things besides the one enemy of remorse to corrode my tranquillity of mind. I was sure to find some one to excel me in something, and this was enough to embitter my peace. Our living Goldsmith is my favorite poet, and I perhaps insensibly venerate the genius the more because I find something congenial in the infirmities of the man. I can fully credit the anecdotes recorded of him. I too could once have been jealous of a puppet handling a spontoon; I too could once have been miserable if two ladies at the theatre were more the

objects of attention than myself! You, Clarence, will not despise me for this confession; those who knew me less would. Fools! there is no man so great as not to have some littleness more predominant than all his greatness. Our virtues are the dupes, and often only the playthings, of our follies!

"I entered the world,—with what advantages and what avidity! I smile, but it is mournfully, in looking back to that day. Though rich, high-born, and good-looking, I possessed not one of these three qualities in that eminence which could alone satisfy my love of superiority, and desire of effect. I knew this somewhat humiliating truth; for, though vain, I was not conceited. Vanity, indeed, is the very antidote to conceit; for while the former makes us all *nerve* to the opinion of others, the latter is perfectly satisfied with its opinion of itself.

"I knew this truth, and as Pope, if he could not be the greatest of poets, resolved to be the most correct, so I strove, since I could not be the handsomest, the wealthiest, and the noblest of my contemporaries, to excel them, at least, in the grace and consummateness of manner; and in this, after incredible pains, after diligent apprenticeship in the world, and intense study in the closet, I at last flattered myself that I had succeeded. Of all success, while we are yet in the flush of youth, and its capacities of enjoyment, I can imagine none more intoxicating or gratifying than the success of society, and I had certainly some years of its triumph and *éclat*. I was courted, followed, flattered, and sought by the most envied and fastidious circles in England, and even in Paris; for society, so indifferent to those who disdain it, overwhelms with its gratitude — profuse though brief — those who devote themselves to its amusement. The

victim to sameness and *ennui*, it offers, like the pallid and luxurious Roman, a reward for a new pleasure; and, as long as our industry or talent can afford the pleasure, the reward is ours. At that time, then, I reaped the full harvest of my exertions; the disappointment and vexation were of later date.

"I now come to the great era of my life,—love. Among my acquaintance was Lady Mary Walden, a widow of high birth, and noble, though not powerful connections. She lived about twenty miles from London, in a beautiful retreat; and, though not rich, her jointure, rendered ample by economy, enabled her to indulge her love of society. Her house was always as full as its size would permit, and I was among the most welcome of its visitors. She had an only daughter,—even now, through the dim mists of years, that beautiful and fairy form rises still and shining before me, undimmed by sorrow, unfaded by time. Caroline Walden was the object of general admiration, and her mother, who attributed the avidity with which her invitations were accepted by all the wits and fine gentlemen of the day to the charms of her own conversation, little suspected the face and wit of her daughter to be the magnet of attraction. I had no idea at that time of marriage, still less could I have entertained such a notion, unless the step had greatly exalted my rank and prospects.

"The poor and powerless Caroline Walden was therefore the last person for whom I had what the jargon of mothers terms 'serious intentions.' However, I was struck with her exceeding loveliness, and amused by the vivacity of her manners; moreover, my vanity was excited by the hope of distancing all my competitors for the smiles of the young beauty. Accordingly, I laid

myself out to please, and neglected none of those subtle and almost secret attentions which, of all flatteries, are the most delicate and successful; and I succeeded. Caroline loved me with all the earnestness and devotion which characterize the love of woman. It never occurred to her that I was only trifling with those affections which it seemed so ardently my intention to win. She knew that my fortune was large enough to dispense with the necessity of fortune with my wife, and in birth she would have equalled men of greater pretensions to myself; added to this, long adulation had made her sensible, though not vain of her attractions, and she listened with a credulous ear to the insinuated flatteries I was so well accustomed to instil.

"Never shall I forget — no, though I double my present years — the shock, the wildness of despair with which she first detected the selfishness of my homage; with which she saw that I had only mocked her trusting simplicity; and that while she had been lavishing the richest treasures of her heart before the burning altars of Love, my idol had been Vanity, and my offerings deceit. She tore herself from the profanation of my grasp; she shrouded herself from my presence. All interviews with me were rejected; all my letters returned to me unopened; and though, in the repentance of my heart, I entreated, I urged her to accept vows that were no longer insincere, her pride became her punishment, as well as my own. In a moment of bitter and desperate feeling, she accepted the offers of another, and made the marriage bond a fatal and irrevocable barrier to our reconciliation and union.

"Oh! how I now cursed my infatuation; how passionately I recalled the past! how coldly I turned from the hollow and false world, to whose service I had sacrificed

my happiness, to muse and madden over the prospects I had destroyed, and the loving and noble heart I had rejected! Alas! after all, what is so ungrateful as that world for which we renounce so much! Its votaries resemble the Gymnosophists of old, and while they profess to make their chief end pleasure, we can only learn that they expose themselves to every torture and every pain!

“ Lord Merton, the man whom Caroline now called husband, was among the wealthiest and most dissipated of his order; and two years after our separation I met once more with the victim of my unworthiness, blazing in ‘the full front’ of courtly splendor, — the leader of its gayeties, and the cynosure of her followers. Intimate with the same society, we were perpetually cast together, and Caroline was proud of displaying the indifference towards me, which, if she felt not, she had at least learned artfully to assume. This indifference was her ruin. The depths of my evil passion were again sounded and aroused, and I resolved yet to humble the pride and conquer the coldness which galled to the very quick the morbid acuteness of my self-love. I again attached myself to her train, — I bowed myself to the very dust before her. What to me were her chilling reply and disdainful civilities! — only still stronger excitements to persevere.

“ I spare you and myself the gradual progress of my schemes. A woman may recover her first passion, it is true; but then she must replace it with another. That other was denied to Caroline: she had not even children to engross her thoughts and to occupy her affections; and the gay world, which to many becomes an object, was to her only an escape.

“ Clarence, my triumph came! Lady Walden (who had never known our secret) invited me to her house:

Caroline was there. In the same spot where we had so often stood before, and in which her earliest affections were insensibly breathed away, in that same spot I drew from her colorless and trembling lips the confession of her weakness, the restored and pervading power of my remembrance.

"But Caroline was a proud and virtuous woman: even while her heart betrayed her, her mind resisted; and in the very avowal of her unconquered attachment, she renounced and discarded me forever. I was not an ungenerous, though a vain man; but my generosity was wayward, tainted, and imperfect. I could have borne the separation; I could have severed myself from her; I could have flown to the uttermost parts of the earth; I could have hoarded there my secret yet unextinguished love, and never disturbed her quiet by a murmur; but then the fiat of separation must have come from *me*! My vanity could not bear that *her* lips should reject me; that *my* part was not to be the nobility of sacrifice, but the submission of resignation. However, my better feelings were aroused, and though I could not stifle, I concealed, my selfish repinings. We parted: she returned to town, I buried myself in the country; and amidst the literary studies to which, though by fits and starts, I was passionately devoted, I endeavored to forget my ominous and guilty love.

"But I was then too closely bound to the world not to be perpetually reminded of its events. My retreat was thronged with occasional migrators from London; my books were mingled with the news and scandal of the day. All spoke to me of Lady Merton; not as I loved to picture her to myself, pale and sorrowful, and brooding over my image, but gay, dissipated, the dispenser of smiles, the prototype of joy. I contrasted this ac-

count of her with the melancholy and gloom of my own feelings, and I resented her seeming happiness as an insult to myself.

“ In this angry and fretful mood I returned to London. My empire was soon resumed; and now, Linden, comes the most sickening part of my confessions. Vanity is a growing and insatiable disease: what seems to its desires as wealth to-day, to-morrow it rejects as poverty. I was at first contented to know that I was beloved; by degrees, slow, yet sure, I desired that others should know it also. I longed to display my power over the celebrated and courted Lady Merton; and to put the last crown to my reputation and importance. The envy of others is the food of our own self-love. Oh, you know not, you dream not, of the galling mortifications to which a proud woman, whose love commands her pride, is subjected! I imposed upon Caroline the most humiliating, the most painful trials; I would allow her to see none but those I pleased; to go to no place where I withheld my consent; and I hesitated not to exert and testify my power over her affections, in proportion to the publicity of the opportunity.

“ Yet, with all this littleness, would you believe that I loved Caroline with the most ardent and engrossing passion? I have paused behind her, in order to kiss the ground she trod on; I have stayed whole nights beneath her window, to catch one glimpse of her passing form, even though I had spent hours of the day-time in her society; and, though my love burned and consumed me like a fire, I would not breathe a single wish against her innocence, or take advantage of my power to accomplish what I knew, from her virtue and pride, no atonement could possibly repay. Such are the inconsistencies of the heart, and such, while they prevent our perfection

redeem us from the utterness of vice! Never, even in my wildest days, was I blind to the glory of virtue, yet never, till my latest years, have I enjoyed the faculty to avail myself of my perception. I resembled the mole, which by Boyle is supposed to possess the idea of light, but to be unable to comprehend the objects on which it shines.

"Among the varieties of my prevailing sin, was a weakness, common enough to worldly men. While I ostentatiously played off the love I had *excited*, I could not bear to show the love I *felt*. In our country, and perhaps, though in a less degree, in all other highly artificial states, enthusiasm, or even feeling of any kind, is ridiculous; and I could not endure the thought that my treasured and secret affections should be dragged from their retreat, to be cavilled and carped at by

Every beardless, vain comparative:

"This weakness brought on the catastrophe of my love; for, mark me, Clarence, it is through our weakness that our vices are punished! One night I went to a masquerade; and while I was sitting in a remote corner, three of my acquaintances, whom I recognized, though they knew it not, approached and rallied me upon my *romantic* attachment to Lady Merton. One of them was a woman of a malicious and sarcastic wit; the other two were men whom I disliked, because their pretensions interfered with mine: they were diners-out, and anecdote-mongers. Stung to the quick by their sarcasms and laughter, I replied in a train of mingled arrogance and jest; at last I spoke slightly of the person in question; and these profane and false lips dared not only to disown the faintest love to that being who was more to me than all on earth, but even to speak of herself with ridicule, and her affection with disdain.

"In the midst of this, I turned and beheld, within hearing, a figure which I knew upon the moment. O Heaven! the burning shame and agony of that glance! It raised its mask; I saw that blanched cheek, and that trembling lip! and I knew that the iron had indeed entered into her soul.

"Clarence, I never beheld her again alive. Within a week from that time she was a corpse. She had borne much, suffered much, and murmured not; but this shock pressed too hard, came too home, and from the hand of him for whom she would have sacrificed all! I stood by her in death; I beheld my work; and I turned away, a wanderer and a pilgrim upon the face of the earth. Verily, I have had my reward."

The old man paused, in great emotion; and Clarence, who could offer him no consolation, did not break the silence. In a few minutes Talbot continued, —

"From that time the smile of woman was nothing to me; I seemed to grow old in a single day. Life lost to me all its objects. A dreary and desert blank stretched itself before me; the sounds of creation had only in my ears one voice; the past, the future, one image. I left my country for twenty years, and lived an idle and hopeless man in the various courts of the Continent.

"At the age of fifty I returned to England. The wounds of the past had not disappeared, but they were scarred over; and I longed, like the rest of my species, to have an object in view. At that age, if we have seen much of mankind, and possess the talents to profit by our knowledge, we must be one of two sects: a politician or a philosopher. My time was not yet arrived for the latter, so I resolved to become the former; but this was denied me, for my vanity had assumed a differ-

ent shape. It is true that I cared no longer for the reputation women can bestow; but I was eager for the applause of men, and I did not like the long labor necessary to attain it. I wished to make a short road to my object, and I eagerly followed every turn but the right one, in the hopes of its leading me sooner to my goal.

“The great characteristic of a vain man, in contradistinction to an ambitious man, and his eternal obstacle to a high and honorable fame, is this: he requires for any expenditure of trouble too speedy a reward; he cannot wait for years, and climb, step by step, to a lofty object; whatever he attempts, he must seize at a single grasp. Added to this, he is incapable of an exclusive attention to one end; the universality of his cravings is not contented, unless it devours all; and thus he is perpetually doomed to fritter away his energies by grasping at the trifling baubles within his reach, and in gathering the worthless fruit, which a single sun can mature.

“This, then, was my fault, and the cause of my failure. I could not give myself up to finance, nor puzzle through the intricacies of commerce: even the common parliamentary drudgeries of constant attendance and late hours, were insupportable to me; and so, after two or three ‘splendid orations,’ as my friends termed them, I was satisfied with the puffs of the pamphleteers, and closed my political career. I was now, then, the wit and the conversationalist. With my fluency of speech and variety of information, these were easy distinctions; and the popularity of a dinner-table, or the approbation of a literary coterie, consoled me for the more public and more durable applause I had resigned.

“But even this gratification did not last long. I fell ill; and the friends who gathered round the wit, fled

from the valetudinarian. This disgusted me, and when I was sufficiently recovered, I again returned to the Continent. But I had a fit of misanthropy and solitude upon me, and so it was not to courts and cities, the scenes of former gayeties, that I repaired; on the contrary, I hired a house by one of the most sequestered of the Swiss lakes, and, avoiding the living, I surrendered myself, without interruption or control, to commune with the dead. I surrounded myself with books, and pored, with a curious and searching eye, into those works which treat particularly upon 'man.' My passions were over, my love of pleasure and society was dried up, and I had now no longer the obstacles which forbid us to be wise; I unlearned the precepts my manhood had acquired, and in my old age I commenced philosopher; Religion lent me her aid, and by her holy lamp my studies were coned and my hermitage illuminated.

"There are certain characters which, in the world, are evil, and in seclusion are good: Rousseau, whom I know well, is one of them. These persons are of a morbid sensitiveness, which is perpetually galled by collision with others. In short, they are under the dominion of VANITY; and that vanity, never satisfied, and always restless in the various competitions of society, produces 'envy, malice, hatred, and all uncharitableness!' But, in solitude, the good and benevolent dispositions with which our self-love no longer interferes, have room to expand and ripen without being cramped by opposing interests: this will account for many seeming discrepancies in character. There are also some men in whom old age supplies the place of solitude, and Rousseau's antagonist and mental antipodes, Voltaire, is of this order. The pert, the malignant, the

arrogant, the lampooning author, in his youth and manhood, has become, in his old age, the mild, the benevolent, and the venerable philosopher. Nothing is more absurd than to receive the characters of great men so implicitly upon the word of a biographer; and nothing can be less surprising than our eternal disputes upon individuals; for no man throughout life is the same being, and each season of our existence contradicts the characteristics of the last.

“And now, in my solitude and my old age, a new spirit entered within me; the game in which I had engaged so vehemently was over for me; and I joined to my experience as a player, my coolness as a spectator. I no longer struggled with my species, and I began insensibly to love them. I established schools, and founded charities; and in secret, but active, services to mankind, I employed my exertions and lavished my desires.

“From this amendment I date the peace of mind and elasticity which I now enjoy; and in my later years, the happiness which I pursued in my youth and maturity so hotly, yet so ineffectually, has flown unsolicited to my breast.

“About five years ago I came again to England, with the intention of breathing my last in the country which gave me birth. I retired to my family home; I endeavored to divert myself in agricultural improvements, and my rental was consumed in speculation. This did not please me long; I sought society,—society in Yorkshire! You may imagine the result: I was out of my element; the mere distance from the metropolis, from all genial companionship, sickened me with a vague feeling of desertion and solitude; for the first time in my life I felt my age and my celibacy. Once more I

returned to town; a complaint attacked my lungs, the physicians recommended the air of this neighborhood, and I chose the residence I now inhabit. Without being exactly in London, I can command its advantages, and obtain society as a recreation, without buying it by restraint. I am not fond of new faces, nor any longer covetous of show; my old servant therefore contented me; for the future, I shall, however, satisfy your fears, remove to a safer habitation, and obtain a more numerous guard. It is, at all events, a happiness to me that fate, in casting me here, and exposing me to something of danger, has raised up, in you, a friend for my old age, and selected from this great universe of strangers one being to convince my heart that it has not outlived affection. My tale is done: may you profit by its moral!"

When Talbot said that our characters were undergoing a perpetual change, he should have made this reservation, the one ruling passion remains to the last; it may be modified, but it never departs: and it is these modifications which do, for the most part, shape out the channels of our change, or, as Helvetius has beautifully expressed it, "we resemble those vessels which the waves still carry towards the south, when the north wind has ceased to blow;" but in our old age, this passion, having little to feed on, becomes sometimes dormant and inert, and then our good qualities rise, as it were, from an incubus, and have their sway.

Yet these cases are not common, and Talbot was a remarkable instance, for he was a remarkable man. His mind had not slept while the age advanced, and thus it had swelled as it were from the bondage of its earlier passions and prejudices. But little did he think, in the

blindness of self-delusion, — though it was so obvious to Clarence that he could have smiled if he had not rather inclined to weep at the frailties of human nature, — little did he think that the vanity which had cost him so much, remained “a monarch still,” undeposed alike by his philosophy, his religion, or his remorse; and that, debarred by circumstances from all wider and more dangerous fields, it still lavished itself upon trifles unworthy of his powers, and puerilities dishonoring his age. Folly is a courtesan whom we ourselves seek, whose favors we solicit at an enormous price, and who, like Lais, finds philosophers at her door, scarcely less frequently than the rest of mankind!

CHAPTER XXI.

Mrs. Trinket. What d'ye buy,— what d'ye lack, gentlemen ?
Gloves, ribbons, and essences, — ribbons, gloves, and essences.

ETHEREGE.

“AND so; my love,” said Mr. Copperas, one morning at breakfast, to his wife, his right leg being turned over his left, and his dexter hand conveying to his mouth a huge morsel of buttered cake, — “and so, my love, they say that the old fool is going to leave the jackanapes all his fortune?”

“They do say so, Mr. C.: for my part I am quite out of patience with the art of the young man; I daresay he is no better than he should be; he always had a sharp look, and for ought I know, there may be more in that robbery than you or I dreamed of, Mr. Copperas. It was a pity,” continued Mrs. Copperas, upbraiding her lord with true matrimonial tenderness and justice, for the consequences of his having acted from *her* advice, — “it was a pity, Mr. C., that you should have refused to lend him the pistols to go to the old fellow’s assistance, for then who knows but —”

“I might have converted them into *pocket* pistols,” interrupted Mr. C., “and not have overshot the mark, my dear, — ha, ha, ha!”

“Lord, Mr. Copperas, you are always making a joke of everything.”

“No, my dear, for once I am making a joke of nothing.”

"Well, I declare it's shameful," cried Mrs. Copperas, still following up her own indignant meditations, "and after taking such notice of Adolphus, too, and all!"

"Notice, my dear! mere words," returned Mr. Copperas,—"mere words, like ventilators, which make a great deal of air, but *never raise the wind*; but don't put yourself in a *stew*, my love, for the doctors say that *copperas in a stew* is poison!"

At this moment, Mr. de Warens, throwing open the door, announced Mr. Brown: that gentleman entered, with a sedate, but cheerful air. "Well, Mrs. Copperas, your servant; any table-linen wanted? Mr. Copperas, how do you do? I can give you a hint about the stocks. Master Copperas, you are looking bravely; don't you think he wants some new pinbefores, ma'am? But Mr. Clarence Linden, where is he? Not up yet, I daresay? Ah, the present generation is a generation of sluggards, as his worthy *aunt*, Mrs. Minden, used to say."

"I am sure," said Mrs. Copperas, with a disdainful toss of the head, "I know nothing about the young man. He has left us: a very mysterious piece of business, indeed, Mr. Brown; and now I think of it, I can't help saying that we were by no means pleased with your introduction; and, by the by, the chairs you bought for us at the sale were a mere take-in, so slight that Mr. Walruss broke two of them by only sitting down."

"Indeed, ma'am?" said Mr. Brown, with expostulating gravity; "but then Mr. Walruss is so very corpulent. But the young gentleman, what of him?" continued the broker, artfully turning from the point in dispute.

"Lord, Mr. Brown, don't ask me: it was the unluckiest step we ever made to admit him into the bosom of our family; quite a viper, I assure you; absolutely robbed poor Adolphus."

"Lord help us!" said Mr. Brown, with a look which "cast a browner horror" o'er the room; "who would have thought it? And such a pretty young man!"

"Well," said Mr. Copperas, who, occupied in finishing the buttered cake, had hitherto kept silence, "I must be off. Tom,—I mean De Warens,—have you stopped the coach?"

"Yees, sir."

"And what coach is it?"

"It be the Swallow, sir."

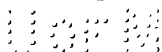
"Oh, very well. And now, Mr. Brown, having swallowed *in the roll*, I will e'en *roll in the Swallow*,—ha, ha, ha! At any rate," thought Mr. Copperas, as he descended the stairs; "*he* has not heard that before."

"Ha, ha!" gravely chuckled Mr. Brown; "what a very facetious, lively gentleman Mr. Copperas is. But touching this ungrateful young man, Mr. Linden, ma'am?"

"Oh, don't tease me, Mr. Brown, I must see after my domestics; ask Mr. Talbot, the old miser, in the next house, the *havarr*, as the French say."

"Well, now," said Mr. Brown, following the good lady downstairs,— "how distressing for me: and to say that he was Mrs. Minden's nephew, too!"

But Mr. Brown's curiosity was not so easily satisfied, and finding Mr. de Warens leaning over the "front" gate, and "pursuing with wistful eyes" the departing "Swallow," he stopped, and, accosting him, soon possessed himself of the facts that "old Talbot had been robbed and murdered, but that Mr. Linden had brought him to life again; and that old Talbot had given him a hundred thousand pounds, and adopted him as his son; and that how Mr. Linden was going to be sent to foreign parts, as an ambassador, or governor, or great person;



and that how meester and meeses were quite 'cut up' about it."

All these particulars having been duly deposited in the mind of Mr. Brown, they produced an immediate desire to call upon the young gentleman, who, to say nothing of his being so very nearly related to his old customer Mrs. Minden, was always so very great a favorite with him, Mr. Brown.

Accordingly, as Clarence was musing over his approaching departure, which was now very shortly to take place, he was somewhat startled by the apparition of Mr. Brown, "Charming day, sir, — charming day," said the friend of Mrs. Minden, — "just called in to congratulate you. I have a few articles, sir, to present you with: quite rarities, I assure you, — quite presents, I may say. I picked them up at a sale of the late Lady Waddilove's most valuable effects. They are just the things, sir, for a gentleman going on a foreign mission. A most curious ivory chest, with an Indian padlock, to hold confidential letters, — belonged formerly, sir, to the Great Mogul; and a beautiful diamond snuff-box, sir, with a picture of Louis XIV. on it, prodigiously fine, and will look so loyal, too; and, sir, if you have any old aunts in the country, to send a farewell present to, I have some charmingly fine cambric, a superb Dresden tea-set, and a lovely little 'ape,' stuffed by the late Lady W. herself."

"My good sir —" began Clarence.

"Oh, no thanks, sir, none at all; too happy to serve a relation of Mrs. Minden, — always proud to keep up family connections. You will be at home to-morrow, sir, at eleven? I will look in, — your most humble servant, Mr. Linden." And, almost upsetting Talbot, who had just entered, Mr. Brown bowed himself out.

CHAPTER XXII.

We talked with open heart and tongue
Affectionate and true
A pair of friends, though I was young
And Matthew seventy-two.

WORDSWORTH.

MEANWHILE the young artist proceeded rapidly with his picture. Devoured by his enthusiasm, and utterly engrossed by the sanguine anticipation of a fame which appeared to him already won, he allowed himself no momentary interval of relaxation; his food was eaten by starts, and without stirring from his easel; his sleep was broken and brief by feverish dreams; he no longer roved with Clarence, when the evening threw her shade over his labors; all air and exercise he utterly relinquished; shut up in his narrow chamber, he passed the hours in a fervid and passionate self-commune, which, even in suspense from his work, riveted his thoughts the closer to its object. All companionship, all intrusion, he bore with irritability and impatience. Even Clarence found himself excluded from the presence of his friend; even his nearest relation, who doated on the very ground which he hallowed with his footstep, was banished from the haunted sanctuary of the painter; from the most placid of human beings, Warner seemed to have grown the most morose.

Want of rest, abstinence from food, the impatience of the strained spirit and jaded nerves, — all contributed to waste the health, while they excited the genius of the artist. A crimson spot, never before seen there,

burned in the centre of his pale cheek; his eye glowed with a brilliant, but unnatural fire; his features grew sharp and attenuated; his bones worked from his whitening and transparent skin; and the soul and frame, turned from their proper and kindly union, seemed contesting with fierce struggles, which should obtain the mastery and the triumph.

But neither his new prospects, nor the coldness of his friend, diverted the warm heart of Clarence from meditating how he could most effectually serve the artist before he departed from the country. It was a peculiar object of desire to Warner that the most celebrated painter of the day, who was in terms of intimacy with Talbot, and who, with the benevolence of real superiority was known to take a keen interest in the success of more youthful and inexperienced genius, — it was a peculiar object of desire to Warner that Sir Joshua Reynolds should see his picture before it was completed; and Clarence, aware of this wish, easily obtained from Talbot a promise that it should be effected. That was the least service of his zeal: touched by the earnestness of Linden's friendship, anxious to oblige in any way his preserver, and well pleased himself to be the patron of merit, Talbot readily engaged to obtain for Warner whatever the attention and favor of high rank or literary distinction could bestow. "As for his picture," said Talbot (when, the evening before Clarence's departure, the latter was renewing the subject), "I shall myself become the purchaser, and at a price which will enable our friend to afford leisure and study for the completion of his next attempt; but even at the risk of offending your friendship, and disappointing your expectations, I will frankly tell you that I think Warner overrates, perhaps not his talents, but his powers; not his ability

for doing something great hereafter, but his capacity of doing it at present. In the pride of his heart he has shown me many of his designs, and I am somewhat of a judge; they want experience, cultivation, taste, and, above all, a deeper study of the Italian masters. They all have the defects of a feverish coloring, an ambitious desire of effect, a wavering and imperfect outline, an ostentatious and unnatural strength of light and shadow; they show, it is true, a genius of no ordinary stamp, but one ill-regulated, inexperienced, and utterly left to its own suggestions for a model. However, I am glad he wishes for the opinion of one necessarily the best judge: let him bring the picture here by Thursday; on that day my friend has promised to visit me; and now let us talk of you and your departure."

The intercourse of men of different ages is essentially unequal: it must always partake more or less of advice on one side, and deference on the other; and although the easy and unpedantic turn of Talbot's conversation made his remarks rather entertaining than obviously admonitory, yet they were necessarily tinged by his experience, and regulated by his interest in the fortunes of his young friend.

"My dearest Clarence," said he, affectionately; "we are about to bid each other a long farewell. I will not damp your hopes and anticipations by insisting on the little chance there is that you should ever see me again. You are about to enter upon the great world, and have within you the desire and the power of success; let me flatter myself that you can profit by my experience. Among the *Colloquia* of Erasmus there is a very entertaining dialogue between Apicius and a man who, desirous of giving a feast to a very large and miscellaneous party, comes to consult the epicure what will be the

best means to give satisfaction to all. Now, you shall be this Spudæus (so I think he is called), and I will be Apicius; for the world, after all, is nothing more than a great feast of different strangers, with different tastes, and of different ages, and we must learn to adapt ourselves to their minds, and our temptations to their passions, if we wish to fascinate or even to content them. Let me then call your attention to the hints and maxims which I have in this paper amused myself with drawing up for your instruction. Write to me from time to time, and I will, in replying to your letters, give you the best advice in my power. For the rest, my dear boy, I have only to request that you will be frank; and I, in my turn, will promise that when I cannot assist, I will never reprove. And now, Clarence, as the hour is late, and you leave us early to-morrow, I will no longer detain you. God bless you, and keep you. You are going to enjoy life, I to anticipate death; so that you can find in me little congenial to yourself; but as the good Pope said to our Protestant countryman, 'Whatever the difference between us, I know well that an old man's blessing is never without its value.' "

As Clarence clasped his benefactor's hand, the tears gushed from his eyes. Is there one being, stubborn as the rock to misfortune, whom kindness does not affect? For my part, kindness seems to me to come with a double grace and tenderness from the old; it seems in them the hoarded and long purified benevolence of years, — as if it had survived and conquered the baseness and selfishness of the ordeal it had passed; as if the winds, which had broken the form, had swept in vain across the heart, and the frosts, which had chilled the blood and whitened the thin locks, had possessed no power over the warm tide of the affections. It is the triumph of

nature over art; it is the voice of the angel which is yet within us. Nor is this all: the tenderness of age is twice blessed, — blessed in its trophies over the obduracy of incrusting and withering years; blessed, because it is tinged with the sanctity of the grave, — because it tells us that the heart will blossom even upon the precincts of the tomb, and flatters us with the inviolacy and immortality of love.

CHAPTER XXIII.

Cannot I create,
Cannot I form, cannot I fashion forth
Another world, another universe ?

KEATS.

THE next morning Clarence, in his way out of town, directed his carriage (the last and not the least acceptable present from Talbot) to stop at Warner's door. Although it was scarcely sunrise, the aged grandmother of the artist was stirring, and opened the door to the early visitor. Clarence passed her with a brief salutation, hurried up the narrow stairs, and found himself in the artist's chamber. The windows were closed, and the air of the room was confined and hot. A few books, chiefly of history and poetry, stood in confused disorder upon some shelves opposite the window. Upon a table beneath them lay a flute, once the cherished recreation of the young painter, but now long neglected and disused; and placed exactly opposite to Warner, so that his eyes might open upon his work, was the high-prized and already more than half-finished picture.

Clarence bent over the bed; the cheek of the artist rested upon his arm in an attitude unconsciously picturesque; the other arm was tossed over the coverlid, and Clarence was shocked to see how emaciated it had become. But ever and anon the lips of the sleeper moved restlessly, and words, low and inarticulate, broke out. Sometimes he started abruptly, and a bright but evanescent flush darted over his faded and hollow cheek;

and once the fingers of the thin hand, which lay upon the bed, expanded, and suddenly closed in a firm and almost painful grasp; it was then that, for the first time, the words of the artist became distinct.

"Ay, ay," said he, "I have thee, I have thee at last. Long, very long, thou hast burned up my heart like fuel, and mocked me, and laughed at my idle efforts; but now, now I have thee. Fame, honor, immortality, whatever thou art called, I have thee, and thou canst not escape; but it is almost too late!" And, as if wrung by some sudden pain, the sleeper turned heavily round, groaned audibly, and awoke.

"My friend," said Clarence, soothingly, and taking his hand, "I have come to bid you farewell. I am just setting off for the Continent, but I could not leave England without once more seeing you. I have good news, too, for you." And Clarence proceeded to repeat Talbot's wish that Warner should bring the picture to his house on the following Thursday, that Sir Joshua might inspect it. He added also, in terms the flattery of which his friendship could not resist exaggerating, Talbot's desire to become the purchaser of the picture.

"Yes," said the artist, as his eye glanced delightedly over his labor, — "yes, I believe when it is once seen there will be many candidates."

"No doubt," answered Clarence; "and for that reason you cannot blame Talbot for wishing to forestall all other competitors for the prize;" and then, continuing the encouraging nature of the conversation, Clarence enlarged upon the new hopes of his friend, besought him to take time, to spare his health, and not to injure both himself and his performance by over-anxiety and hurry. Clarence concluded by retailing Talbot's assurance that in all cases and circumstances he (Talbot) con-

sidered himself pledged to be Warner's supporter and friend.

With something of impatience, mingled with pleasure, the painter listened to all these details: nor was it to Linden's zeal, nor to Talbot's generosity, but rather to the excess of his own merit, that he secretly attributed the brightening prospect afforded him.

The indifference which Warner, though of a disposition naturally kind, evinced at parting with a friend who had always taken so strong an interest in his behalf, and whose tears at that moment contrasted forcibly enough with the apathetic coldness of his own farewell, was a remarkable instance how acute vividness on a single point will deaden feeling on all others. Occupied solely and burningly with one intense thought, which was to him love, friendship, health, peace, wealth, Warner could not excite feelings, languid and exhausted with many and fiery conflicts, to objects of minor interest; and perhaps he inwardly rejoiced that his musings and his study would henceforth be sacred even from friendship.

Deeply affected, — for his nature was exceedingly unselfish, generous, and susceptible, — Clarence tore himself away, placed in the grandmother's hand a considerable portion of the sum he had received from Talbot, hurried into his carriage, and found himself on the high-road to fortune, pleasure, distinction, and the Continent.

But while Clarence, despite of every advantage before him, hastened to a court of dissipation and pleasure, with feelings in which regretful affection for those he had left darkened his worldly hopes, and mingled with the sanguine anticipations of youth, Warner, poor, low-born, wasted with sickness, destitute of friends, shut

out by his temperament from the pleasures of his age, burned with hopes far less alloyed than those of Clarence, and found in them, for the sacrifice of all else, not only a recompense but a triumph.

Thursday came. Warner had made one request of Talbot, which had with difficulty been granted: it was that he himself might, unseen, be the auditor of the great painter's criticisms, and that Sir Joshua should be perfectly unaware of his presence. It had been granted with difficulty, because Talbot wished to spare Warner the pain of hearing remarks which he felt would be likely to fall far short of the sanguine self-elation of the young artist; and it *had* been granted because Talbot imagined that, even should this be the case, the pain would be more than counterbalanced by the salutary effect it might produce. Alas! vanity calculates but poorly upon the vanity of others! What a virtue we should distil from frailty, what a world of pain we should save our brethren, if we would suffer our own weakness to be the measure of theirs.

Thursday came; the painting was placed by the artist's own hand in the most favorable light. A curtain, hung behind it, served as a screen for Warner, who, retiring to his hiding-place, surrendered his heart to delicious forebodings of the critic's wonder, and golden anticipations of the future destiny of his darling work. Not a fear dashed the full and smooth cup of his self-enjoyment. He had lain awake the whole of the night, in restless and joyous impatience for the morrow. At day-break he had started from his bed, he had unclosed his shutters, he had hung over his picture with a fondness greater if possible than he had ever known before; like a mother, he felt as if his own partiality was but a part of a universal tribute; and as his aged relative turned

her dim eyes to the painting, and in her innocent idolatry rather of the artist than his work, praised and expatiated and foretold, his heart whispered, "If it wring this worship from ignorance, what will be the homage of science?"

He who first laid down the now hackneyed maxim, that diffidence is the companion of genius, knew very little of the workings of the human heart. True, there may have been a few such instances, and it is probable that in this maxim, as in most, the exception made the rule. But what could ever reconcile genius to its sufferings, its sacrifices, its fevered inquietudes, the intense labor which can alone produce what the shallow world deems the giant offspring of a momentary inspiration, — what could ever reconcile it to these but the haughty and unquenchable consciousness of internal power; the hope which has the fulness of certainty that in proportion to the toil is the reward; the sanguine and impetuous anticipation of glory, which bursts the boundaries of time and space, and ranges immortality with a prophet's rapture? Rob genius of its confidence, of its lofty self-esteem, and you clip the wings of the eagle: you domesticate, it is true, the wanderer you could not hitherto comprehend, in the narrow bounds of your household affections; you abase and tame it more to the level of your ordinary judgments, but you take from it the power to soar, the hardihood which was content to brave the thunder-cloud and build its eyrie on the rock, for the proud triumph of rising above its kind, and contemplating with a nearer eye the majesty of heaven.

But if something of presumption is a part of the very essence of genius, in Warner it was doubly natural, for he was still in the heat and flush of a design, the defects

of which he had not yet had the leisure to examine; and his talents, self-taught and self-modelled, had never received either the excitement of emulation or the chill of discouragement from the study of the masterpieces of his art.

The painter had not been long alone in his concealment, before he heard steps; his heart beat violently, the door opened, and he saw, through a small hole which he had purposely made in the curtain, a man with a benevolent and prepossessing countenance, whom he instantly recognized as Sir Joshua Reynolds, enter the room, accompanied by Talbot. They walked up to the picture; the painter examined it closely, and in perfect silence. "Silence," thought Warner, "is the best homage of admiration;" but he trembled with impatience to hear the admiration confirmed by words,—those words came too soon.

"It is the work of a clever man, certainly," said Sir Joshua; "*but*" (terrible monosyllable) "of one utterly unskilled in the grand principles of his art: look here, and here, and here, for instance;" and the critic, perfectly unconscious of the torture he inflicted, proceeded to point out the errors of the work. Oh! the agony, the withering agony of that moment to the ambitious artist! In vain he endeavored to bear up against the judgment,—in vain he endeavored to persuade himself that it was the voice of envy which in those cold, measured, *defining* accents, fell like drops of poison upon his heart. He felt at once, and as if by a magical inspiration, the truth of the verdict; the scales of self-delusion fell from his eyes; by a hideous mockery, a kind of terrible pantomime, his goddess seemed at a word, a breath, transformed into a monster: life, which had been so lately concentrated into a single hope, seemed

now, at once and forever, cramped, curdled, blistered into a single disappointment.

"But," said Talbot, who had in vain attempted to arrest the criticisms of the painter (who, very deaf at all times, was, at that time in particular, engrossed by the self-satisfaction always enjoyed by one expatiating on his favorite topic), — "but," said Talbot, in a louder voice, "you own there is great genius in the design?"

"Certainly, there is genius," replied Sir Joshua, in a tone of calm and complacent good-nature; "but what is genius without culture? You say the artist is young, very young; let him take time, — I do not say let him attempt a humbler walk, — let him persevere in the lofty one he has chosen, but let him first retrace every step he has taken; let him devote days, months, years to the most diligent study of the immortal masters of the divine art, before he attempts (to exhibit, at least) another historical picture. He has mistaken altogether the nature of invention: a fine invention is nothing more than a fine deviation from or enlargement on a fine model; imitation, if noble and general, insures the best hope of originality. Above all, let your young friend, if he can afford it, visit Italy."

"He *shall* afford it," said Talbot, kindly, "for he shall have whatever advantages I can procure him; but you see the picture is only half completed, — he could alter it!"

"*He had better burn it!*" replied the painter, with a gentle smile.

And Talbot, in benevolent despair, hurried his visitor out of the room. He soon returned to seek and console the artist, but the artist was gone; the despised, the fatal picture, the blessing and curse of so many anxious and wasted hours, had vanished also with its creator.

CHAPTER XXIV.

What is this soul then ? Whence
Came it ? — It does not seem my own, and I
Have no self-passion or identity !
Some fearful end must be —

There never lived a mortal man, who bent
His appetite beyond his natural sphere,
Put starved and died.

KEATS'S *Endymion*.

ON entering his home, Warner pushed aside, for the first time in his life with disrespect, his aged and kindly relation, who, as if in mockery of the unfortunate artist, stood prepared to welcome and congratulate his return. Bearing his picture in his arms, he rushed upstairs, hurried into his room, and locked the door. Hastily he tore aside the cloth which had been drawn over the picture; hastily and tremblingly he placed it upon the frame accustomed to support it, and then, with a long, long, eager, searching, scrutinizing glance, he surveyed the once beloved mistress of his worship. Presumption, vanity, exaggerated self-esteem, are, in their punishment, supposed to excite ludicrous, not sympathetic, emotion; but there is an *excess* of feeling, produced by whatever cause it may be, into which in spite of ourselves we are forced to enter. Even fear, the most contemptible of the passions, becomes tragic the moment it becomes an agony.

"Well, well!" said Warner at last, speaking very slowly, "it is over; it was a pleasant dream, — but it is

VOL. I. — 12

over: I ought to be thankful for the lesson." Then suddenly changing his mood and tone he repeated, "Thankful! for what? that I am a wretch, — a wretch more utterly hopeless and miserable and abandoned than a man who freights with all his wealth, his children, his wife, the hoarded treasures and blessings of an existence, one ship, one frail, worthless ship, and standing himself on the shore, sees it suddenly go down! Oh, was I not a fool, a right noble fool, a vain fool, an arrogant fool, a very essence and concentration of all things that make a fool, to believe such delicious marvels of myself! What, man!" here his eye saw in the opposite glass his features, livid and haggard with disease, and the exhausting feelings which preyed within him, — "what, man! would nothing serve thee but to be a genius, — *thee*, whom nature stamped with her curse! Dwarf-like and distorted, mean in stature and in lineament, thou wert indeed a glorious being to perpetuate grace and beauty, the majesties and dreams of art! Fame for thee, indeed, — ha, ha! Glory, — ha, ha! a place with Titian, Correggio, Raphael, — ha, ha, ha! O thrice modest, thrice reasonable fool! But this vile daub; this disfigurement of canvas; this loathed and wretched monument of disgrace; this notable candidate for — ha, ha — immortality — this I have, at least, in my power." And seizing the picture he dashed it to the ground, and trampled it with his feet upon the dusty boards, till the moist colors presented nothing but one confused and dingy stain.

This sight seemed to recall him for a moment. He paused, lifted up the picture once more, and placed it on the table. "But," he muttered, "might not this critic be envious? am I sure that he judged rightly, — fairly? The greatest masters have looked askant and

jealous at their pupil's works. And then, how slow, how cold, how damned cold, how indifferently he spoke; why, the very art should have warmed him more. Could he have — No, no, no; it *was* true, it was! I felt the conviction thrill through me like a searing iron. Burn it, — did he say, ay, — burn it; it shall be done this instant."

And hastening to the door, he undid the bolt. He staggered back as he beheld his old and nearest surviving relative, the mother of his father, seated upon the ground beside the door, terrified by the exclamations she did not dare to interrupt. She rose slowly, and with difficulty, as she saw him; and throwing around him the withered arms which had nursed his infancy, exclaimed, "My child! my poor, poor child! what has come to you of late? You, who were so gentle, so mild, so quiet, — you are no longer the same; and oh, my son, how ill you look! Your father looked so just before he died!"

"Ill!" said he, with a sort of fearful gayety, — "ill; no, I never was so well; I have been in a dream till now, — but I have woke at last. Why, it is true that I have been silent and shy, but I will be so no more. I will laugh, and talk, and walk, and make love, and drink wine, and be all that other men are. Oh, we will be so merry. But stay here, while I fetch a light."

"A light, my child, for what?"

"For a funeral!" shouted Warner, and rushing past her he descended the stairs, and returned almost in an instant with a light.

Alarmed and terrified, the poor old woman had remained motionless, and weeping violently. Her tears Warner did not seem to notice; he pushed her gently

into the room, and began deliberately, and without uttering a syllable, to cut the picture into shreds.

"What are you about, my child?" cried the old woman; "you are mad,—it is your beautiful picture that you are destroying."

Warner did not reply, but, going to the hearth, piled together, with nice and scrupulous care, several pieces of paper, and stick, and matches, into a sort of pyre; then placing the shreds of the picture upon it, he applied the light, and the whole was instantly in a blaze.

"Look, look!" cried he, in an hysterical tone, "how it burns, and crackles, and blazes! What master ever equalled it now? — no fault now in those colors, — no false tints in that light and shade! See how that flame darts up and soars! — that flame is my spirit! Look, — is it not restless? — does it not aspire bravely? — why, all its brother flames are grovellers to it! — and now, — why don't you look? — it falters, fades, droops, and — ha, ha, ha! — poor idler, the fuel is consumed, and — it is darkness!"

As Warner uttered these words his eyes reeled; the room swam before him; the excitement of his feeble frame had reached its highest pitch; the disease of many weeks had attained its crisis; and tottering back a few paces he fell upon the floor, the victim of a delirious and raging fever.

But it was not thus that the young artist was to die. He was reserved for a death that, like his real nature, had in it more of gentleness and poetry. He recovered, by slow degrees, and his mind, almost in spite of himself, returned to that profession from which it was impossible to divert the thoughts and musings of many years. Not that he resumed the pencil and the easel; on the contrary, he could not endure them in his sight:

they appeared, to a mind festered and sore, like a memorial and monument of shame. But he nursed within him a strong and ardent desire to become a pilgrim to that beautiful land of which he had so often dreamed, and which the innocent destroyer of his peace had pointed out as the theatre of inspiration, and the nursery of future fame.

The physicians who, at Talbot's instigation, attended him, looked at his hectic cheek and consumptive frame, and readily flattered his desire; and Talbot, no less interested in Warner's behalf on his own account, than bound by his promise to Clarence, generously extended to the artist that bounty which is the most precious prerogative of the rich. Notwithstanding her extreme age, his grandmother insisted upon attending him: there is in the heart of woman so deep a well of love that no age can freeze it. They made the voyage: they reached the shore of the myrtle and the vine, and entered the imperial city. The air of Rome seemed at first to operate favorably upon the health of the English artist. His strength appeared to increase, his spirit to expand; and though he had relapsed into more than his original silence and reserve, he resumed, with apparent energy, the labors of the easel: so that they who looked no deeper than the surface might have imagined the scar healed, and the real foundation of future excellence begun.

But while Warner most humbled himself before the gods of the pictured world; while the true principles of the mighty art opened in their fullest glory on his soul; precisely at this very moment shame and despondency were most bitter at his heart; and while the enthusiasm of the painter kindled, the ambition of the man despaired. But still he went on, transfusing into his

canvas the grandeur and simplicity of the Italian school; still, though he felt palpably within him the creeping advance of the deadliest and surest enemy to fame, he pursued, with an unwearied ardor, the mechanical completion of his task; still, the morning found him bending before the easel, and the night brought to his solitary couch meditation rather than sleep. The fire, the irritability which he had evinced before his illness had vanished, and the original sweetness of his temper had returned; he uttered no complaint, he dwelt upon no anticipation of success, — hope and regret seemed equally dead within him; and it was only when he caught the fond, glad eyes of his aged attendant that his own filled with tears, or that the serenity of his brow darkened into sadness.

This went on for some months, till one evening they found the painter by his window, seated opposite to an unfinished picture. The pencil was still in his hand; the quiet of settled thought was still upon his countenance; the soft breeze of a southern twilight waved the hair livingly from his forehead; the earliest star of a southern sky lent to his cheek something of that subdued lustre which, when touched by enthusiasm, it had been accustomed to wear. But these were only the mockeries of life: life itself was no more! He had died, reconciled, perhaps, to the loss of fame, — in discovering that art is to be loved for itself, and not for the rewards it may bestow upon the artist.

There are two tombs close to each other in the stranger's burial-place at Rome: they cover those for whom life, unequally long, terminated in the same month. The one is of a woman, bowed with the burden of many years; the other darkens over the dust of the young artist.

CHAPTER XXV.

Think upon my grief,
And on the justice of my flying hence,
To keep me from a most unholy match.

SHAKESPEARE.

"BUT are you quite sure," said General St. Leger, — "are you quite sure that this girl still permits Mordaunt's addresses?"

"Sure!" cried Miss Diana St. Leger, — "sure, General! I saw it with my own eyes. They were standing together in the copse, when I, who had long had my suspicions, crept up, and saw them; and Mr. Mordaunt held her hand, and kissed it every moment. Shocking and indecorous!"

"I hate that man! — as proud as Lucifer," growled the general. "Shall we lock her up, or starve her?"

"No, General, something better than that."

"What, my love? Flog her!"

"She's too old for that, brother; we'll marry her."

"Marry her!"

"Yes; to Mr. Glumford, — you know that he has asked her several times."

"But she cannot bear him."

"We'll make her bear him, General St. Leger."

"But if she marries, I shall have nobody to nurse me when I have the gout."

"Yes, brother: I know of a nice little girl, Martha Richardson, your second cousin's youngest daughter; you know he has fourteen children, and you may have them all, one after another, if you like."

"Very true, Diana,—let the jade marry Mr. Glumford."

"She shall," said the sister; "and I'll go about it this very moment; meantime I'll take care that she does not see her lover any more."

About three weeks after this conversation, Mordaunt, who had in vain endeavored to see Isabel, who had not even heard from her, whose letters had been returned to him unopened, and who, consequently, was in despair, received the following note:—

This is the first time I have been able to write to you, at least to get my letter conveyed: it is a strange messenger that I have employed, but I happened formerly to make his acquaintance, and accidentally seeing him to-day, the extremity of the case induced me to give him a commission which I could trust to no one else. Algernon, are not the above sentences written with admirable calmness? are they not very explanatory, very consistent, very cool? and yet do you know that I firmly believe I am going mad. My brain turns round and round, and my hand burns so that I almost think that, like our old nurse's stories of the fiend, it will scorch the paper as I write. And I see strange faces in my sleep and in my waking, all mocking at me, and they torture and haunt me; and when I look at those faces, I see no human relenting, no! though I weep and throw myself on my knees, and implore them to save me. Algernon, my only hope is in you. You know that I have always hitherto refused to ruin you; and even now, though I implore you to deliver me, I will not be so selfish as—as—I know not what I write, but if I cannot be your wife,—I will not be his! No! if they drag me to church, it shall be to my grave, not my bridal.

ISABEL ST. LEGER.

When Mordaunt had read this letter, which, in spite of its incoherence, his fears readily explained, he rose hastily; his eye rested upon a sober-looking man, clad

in brown. The proud love no spectators to their emotions.

"Who are you, sir?" said Algernon, quickly.

"Morris Brown," replied the stranger, coolly and civilly. "Brought that letter to you, sir; shall be very happy to serve you with anything else; just fitted out a young gentleman as ambassador, a nephew to Mrs. Minden,—very old friend of mine. Beautiful slabs you have here, sir, but they want a few nick-nacks; shall be most happy to supply you; got a lovely little ape, sir, stuffed by the late Lady Waddilove; it would look charming with this old-fashioned carving; give the room quite the air of a museum!"

"And so," said Mordaunt, for whose ear the eloquence of Mr. Brown contained only one sentence,—
"and so you brought this note, and will take back my answer?"

"Yes, sir; anything to keep up family connections: I know a Lady Morden very well,—very well, indeed, sir: a relation of yours, I presume, by the similarity of the name; made her many valuable presents; shall be most happy to do the same to you, when you are married, sir. You will refurnish the house, I suppose? Let me see: fine proportions to this room, sir,—about thirty-six feet by twenty-eight; I'll do the thing twenty per cent cheaper than the trade; and touching the lovely little—"

"Here," interrupted Mordaunt, "you will take back this note, and be sure that Miss Isabel St. Leger has it as soon as possible; oblige me by accepting this trifle,—a trifle indeed compared with my gratitude if this note reaches its destination safely."

"I am sure," said Mr. Brown, looking with surprise at the gift, which he held with no unwilling hand,—

"I am sure, sir, that you are very generous, and strongly remind me of your relation, Lady Morden; and if you would like the lovely little ape as a present, — I mean *really* a present, — you shall have it, Mr. Mordaunt."

But Mr. Mordaunt had left the room, and the sober Morris, looking round, and cooling in his generosity, said to himself, "It is well he did not hear me, however; but I hope he will marry the nice young lady, for I love doing a kindness. This house must be refurnished, — no lady will like these old-fashioned chairs."

CHAPTER XXVI.

Squire and fool are the same thing here. — FARQUHAR.

In such a night

Did Jessica steal from the wealthy Jew,
And, with an unthrift love, did run from Venice.

SHAKESPEARE.

THE persecutions which Isabel had undergone had indeed preyed upon her reason as well as her health; and in her brief intervals of respite from the rage of the uncle, the insults of the aunt, and worse than all, the addresses of the intended bridegroom, her mind, shocked and unhinged, reverted with such intensity to the sufferings she endured as to give her musings the character of insanity. It was in one of these moments that she had written to Mordaunt; and had the contest continued much longer, the reason of the unfortunate and persecuted girl would have totally deserted her.

She was a person of acute, and even poignant sensibilities, and these the imperfect nature of her education had but little served to guide or to correct; but as her habits were pure and good, the impulses which spring from habit were also sinless and exalted, and if they erred, "they leaned on virtue's side," and partook rather of a romantic and excessive generosity than of the weakness of *womanhood* or the selfishness of passion. All the misery and debasement of her equivocal and dependent situation had not been able to drive her into compliance with Mordaunt's passionate and urgent prayers; and her heart was proof even to the eloquence

of love, when that eloquence pointed towards the worldly injury and depreciation of her lover; but this new persecution was utterly unforeseen in its nature and intolerable from its cause. To marry another; to be torn forever from one in whom her whole heart was wrapped; to be forced not only to forego his love, but to feel that the very thought of him was a crime, — all this backed by the vehement and galling insults of her relations, and the sullen and unmoved meanness of her intended bridegroom, who answered her candor and confession with a stubborn indifference and renewed overtures, made a load of evil which could neither be borne with resignation nor contemplated with patience.

She was sitting, after she had sent her letter, with her two relations, for they seldom trusted her out of their sight, when Mr. Glumford was announced. Now, Mr. George Glumford was a country gentleman of what might be termed a third-rate family in the country: he possessed about twelve hundred a year, to say nothing of the odd pounds, shillings, and pence, which, however, did not meet with such contempt in his memory or estimation; was of a race which could date as far back as Charles II.; had been educated at a country school with sixty others, chiefly inferior to himself in rank; and had received the last finish at a very small hall at Oxford. In addition to these advantages, he had been indebted to nature for a person five feet eight inches high, and stout in proportion; for hair very short, very straight, and of a red hue, which even through powder cast out a mellow glow; for an obstinate dogged sort of nose, beginning in snub, and ending in bottle; for cold, small gray eyes, a very small mouth, pinched up and avaricious; and very large, very freckled, yet rather white hands, the nails of which were punc-

tiliously cut into a point every other day with a pair of scissors which Mr. Glumford often boasted had been in his possession since his eighth year, — namely, for about thirty-two legitimate revolutions of the sun.

He was one of those persons who are equally close and adventurous; who love the *éclat* of a little speculation, but take exceeding good care that it should be, in their own graceful phrase, “on the safe side of the hedge.” In pursuance of this characteristic of mind, he had resolved to fall in love with Miss Isabel St. Leger; for she being very dependent, he could boast to her of his disinterestedness, and hope that she would be economical through a principle of gratitude; and being the nearest relation to the opulent General St. Leger, and his unmarried sister, there seemed to be every rational probability of her inheriting the bulk of their fortunes. Upon these hints of prudence spake Mr. George Glumford.

Now, when Isabel, partly in her ingenuous frankness, partly from the passionate promptings of her despair, revealed to him her attachment to another, and her resolution never, with her own consent, to become his, it seemed to the slow but not uncalculating mind of Mr. Glumford not by any means desirable that he should forego his present intentions, but by all means desirable that he should make this reluctance of Isabel’s an excuse for sounding the intentions and increasing the posthumous liberality of the East Indian and his sister.

“The girl is of my nearest blood,” said the major-general, “and if I don’t leave my fortune to her, who the devil should I leave it to, sir;” and so saying, the speaker, who was in a fell paroxysm of the gout, looked so fiercely at the hinting wooer, that Mr. George Glum-

ford, who was no Achilles, was somewhat frightened, and thought it expedient to hint no more.

"My brother," said Miss Diana, "is so odd; but he is the most generous of men: besides, the girl has claims upon him."

Upon these speeches, Mr. Glumford thought himself secure, and inly resolving to punish the fool for her sulkiness and bad taste as soon as he lawfully could, he continued his daily visits, and told his sporting acquaintance that his time was coming.

Revenons à nos moutons, forgive this preliminary detail, and let us return to Mr. Glumford himself, whom we left at the door, pulling and fumbling at the glove which covered his right hand, in order to present the naked palm to Miss Diana St. Leger. After this act was performed, he approached Isabel, and, drawing his chair near to her, proceeded to converse with her as the Ogre did with Puss in Boots, — namely, "as civilly as an Ogre could do."

This penance had not proceeded far before the door was again opened, and Mr. Morris Brown presented himself to the conclave.

"Your servant, General; your servant, Madam. I took the liberty of coming back again, Madam, because I forgot to show you some very fine silks, the most extraordinary bargain in the world, — quite presents; and I have a *Sèvres* bowl here, a superb article, from the cabinet of the late Lady Waddilove."

Now Mr. Brown was a very old acquaintance of Miss Diana St. Leger; for there is a certain class of old maids with whom our fair readers are no doubt acquainted, who join to a great love of expense, a great love of bargains, and who never purchase at the regular place if they can find any *irregular* vender. They are great

friends of Jews and itinerants, hand-in-glove with smugglers, Ladies Bountiful to pedlers, are diligent readers of puffs and advertisements, and eternal haunters of sales and auctions. Of this class was Miss Diana a most prominent individual; judge, then, how acceptable to her was the acquaintance of Mr. Brown. That indefatigable merchant of miscellanies had, indeed, at a time when brokers were perhaps rather more rare and respectable than now, a numerous country acquaintance, and thrice a year he performed a sort of circuit to all his customers and connections; hence his visit to St. Leger House, and hence Isabel's opportunity of conveying her epistle.

"Pray," said Mr. Glumford, who had heard much of Mr. Brown's "presents" from Miss Diana, — "pray don't you furnish rooms, and *things of that sort*?"

"Certainly, sir, certainly, in the best manner possible."

"Oh! very well, I shall want some rooms furnished soon, — a bedroom, and a dressing-room; and things of that sort, you know. And so, perhaps you may have something in your box that will suit me, gloves or handkerchiefs, or shirts, or things of that sort."

"Yes, sir; everything, — I sell everything," said Mr. Brown, opening his box. "I beg pardon, Miss Isabel, I have dropped my handkerchief by your chair; allow me to stoop," and Mr. Brown, stooping under the table, managed to effect his purpose; unseen by the rest, a note was slipped into Isabel's hand; and under pretence of stooping too, she managed to secure the treasure. Love need well be honest if, even when it is most true, it leads us into so much that is false!

Mr. Brown's box was now unfolded before the eyes of the crafty Mr. Glumford, who, having selected three

pair of gloves, offered the exact half of the sum demanded.

Mr. Brown lifted up his hands and eyes.

"You see," said the imperturbable Glumford, "that if you let me have them for that, and they last me well, and don't come unsewn, and stand cleaning, you'll have my custom in furnishing the house, and rooms, and — things of that sort."

Struck with the grandeur of this opening, Mr. Brown yielded, and the gloves were bought.

"The fool!" thought the noble George, laughing in his sleeve, — "as if I should ever furnish the house from his box!"

Strange that some men should be proud of being mean.

The moment Isabel escaped to dress for dinner, she opened her lover's note. It was as follows: —

Be in *the* room, your retreat, at nine this evening. Let the window be left unclosed. Precisely at that hour I will be with you. I shall have everything in readiness for your flight. Be sure, dearest Isabel, that nothing prevents your meeting me there, even if all your house follow or attend you. I will bear you from all. Oh, Isabel! in spite of the mystery and wretchedness of your letter, I feel too happy, too blessed at the thought that our fates will be at length united, and that the union is at hand. Remember, nine.

A. M.

Love is a feeling which has so little to do with the world, a passion so little regulated by the known laws of our more steady and settled emotions, that the thoughts which it produces are always more or less connected with exaggeration and romance. To the secret spirit of enterprise which, however chilled by his pursuits and habits, still burned within Mordaunt's breast, there was

a wild pleasure in the thought of bearing off his mistress and his bride from the very home and hold of her false friends and real foes; while in the contradictions of the same passion, Isabel, so far from exulting at her approaching escape, trembled at her danger, and blushed for her temerity; and the fear and the modesty of woman almost triumphed over her brief energy and fluctuating resolve.

VOL. I. — 13

CHAPTER XXVII.

We haste, — the chosen and the lovely bringing ;
Love still goes with her from her place of birth !
Deep, silent joy, within her soul is springing,
Though in her glance the light no more is mirth.

MRS. HEMANS.

"DAMN it!" said the general.

"The vile creature!" cried Miss Diana.

"I don't understand things of that sort," ejaculated the bewildered Mr. Glumford.

"She has certainly gone," said the valiant general.

"Certainly!" grunted Miss Diana.

"Gone!" echoed the bridegroom *not* to be.

And she was gone! never did more loving and tender heart forsake all, and cling to a more loyal and generous nature. The skies were darkened with clouds,

And the dim stars rushed through them rare and fast ;

and the winds wailed with a loud and ominous voice; and the moon came forth, with a faint and sickly smile, from her chamber in the mist, and then shrank back, and was seen no more; but neither omen nor fear was upon Mordaunt's breast, as it swelled beneath the dark locks of Isabel, which were pressed against it.

As Faith clings the more to the cross of life, while the wastes deepen around her steps, and the adders creep forth upon her path, so Love clasps that which is its hope and comfort the closer, for the desert which encompasses and the dangers which harass its way.

They had fled to London, and Isabel had been placed with a very distant, and very poor, though very high-born relative of Algernon, till the necessary preliminaries could be passed, and the final bond knit. Yet still the generous Isabel would have refused, despite the injury to her own fame, to have ratified a union which filled her with gloomy presentiments for Mordaunt's fate; and still Mordaunt by little and little broke down her tender scruples and self-immolating resolves, and ceased not his eloquence and his suit till the day of his nuptials was set and come.

The morning rose bright and clear, — the autumn was drawing towards its close, and seemed willing to leave its last remembrance tinged with the warmth and softness of its parent summer, rather than with the stern gloom and severity of its chilling successor.

And they stood beside the altar, and their vows were exchanged. A slight tremor came over Algernon's frame, a slight shade darkened his countenance; for even in that bridal hour an icy and thrilling foreboding curdled to his heart; it passed, — the ceremony was over, and Mordaunt bore his blushing and weeping bride from the church. His carriage was in attendance; for, not knowing how long the home of his ancestors might be his, he was impatient to return to it. The old Countess d'Arcy, Mordaunt's relation, with whom Isabel had been staying, called them back to bless them; for, even through the coldness of old age, she was touched by the singularity of their love, and affected by their nobleness of heart. She laid her wan and shrivelled hand upon each, as she bade them farewell, and each shrank back involuntarily, for the cold and light touch seemed like the fingers of the dead.

Fearful indeed is the vicinity of death and life, — the

bridal chamber and the charnel. That night the old woman died. It appeared as if fate had set its seal upon the union it had so long forbidden, and had woven a dark thread even in the marriage bond. At least, it tore from two hearts, over which the cloud and the blast lay couched in a "grim repose," the last shelter, which, however frail and distant, seemed left to them upon the inhospitable earth.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

Live while ye may, yet happy pair : enjoy
Short pleasures, for long woes are to succeed.

MILTON.

THE autumn and the winter passed away; Mordaunt's relation continued implacable. Algernon grieved for this, independent of worldly circumstances; for, though he had seldom seen that relation, yet he loved him for former kindness — rather promised, to be sure, than yet shown — with the natural warmth of an affection which has but few objects. However, the old gentleman (a very short, very fat person, — very short and very fat people, when they *are* surly, are the devil and all; for the humors of their mind, like those of their body, have something corrupt and unpurgeable in them) wrote him one bluff, contemptuous letter, in a witty strain, — for he was a bit of a humorist; disowned his connection, and very shortly afterwards died, and left all his fortune to the very Mr. Vavasour who was at law with Mordaunt, and for whom he had always openly expressed the strongest personal dislike, — spite to one relation is a marvellous tie to another. Meanwhile, the lawsuit went on less slowly than lawsuits usually do, and the final decision was very speedily to be given.

We said the autumn and the winter were gone; and it was in one of those latter days in March, when, like a hoiden girl subsiding into dawning womanhood, the rude weather mellows into a softer and tenderer month, that, by the side of a stream, overshadowed by many a brake and tree, sat two persons.

"I know not, dearest Algernon," said one, who was a female, "if this is not almost the sweetest month in the year, because it is the month of *Hope*."

"Ay, Isabel; and they did it wrong who called it harsh, and dedicated it to Mars. I exult even in the fresh winds which hardier frames than mine shrink from, and I love feeling their wild breath fan my cheek as I ride against it. I remember," continued Algernon, musingly, "that on this very day three years ago, I was travelling through Germany, alone and on horseback, and I paused, not far from Ens, on the banks of the Danube. The waters of the river were disturbed and fierce, and the winds came loud and angry against my face, dashing the spray of the waves upon me, and filling my spirit with a buoyant and glad delight; and at that time I had been indulging old dreams of poetry, and had laid my philosophy aside; and in the inspiration of the moment I lifted up my hand towards the quarter whence the winds came, and questioned them audibly of their birthplace and their bourn; and as the enthusiasm increased, I compared them to our human life, which a moment is, and then is *not*; and proceeding from folly to folly, I asked them, as if they were the interpreters of Heaven, for a type and sign of my future lot."

"And what said they?" inquired Isabel, smiling, yet smiling timidly.

"They answered not," replied Mordaunt; "but a voice within me seemed to say, 'Look above!' and I raised my eyes; but I did not see *thee*, love, — so the Book of Fate lied."

"Nay, Algernon, what *did* you see?" asked Isabel, more earnestly than the question deserved.

"I saw a thin cloud, alone amidst many dense and dark ones scattered around; and as I gazed, it seemed

to take the likeness of a funeral procession, — coffin, bearers, priest, all, — as clear in the cloud as I have seen them on the earth; and I shuddered as I saw. But the winds blew the vapor onwards, and it mingled with the broader masses of cloud; and then, Isabel, the sun shone forth for a moment, and I mistook, love, when I said you were not there, for *that* sun was you. But suddenly the winds ceased, and the rain came on fast and heavy; so my romance cooled, and my fever slaked. I thought on the inn at Ens, and the blessings of a wood fire, which is lighted in a moment, and I spurred on my horse accordingly."

"It is very strange," said Isabel.

"What, love?" whispered Algernon, kissing her cheek.

"Nothing, dearest, nothing."

At that instant, the deer, which lay waving their lordly antlers to and fro beneath the avenue which sloped upward from the stream to the house, rose hurriedly and in confusion, and stood gazing, with watchful eyes, upon a man advancing towards the pair.

It was one of the servants with a letter. Isabel saw a faint change (which none else could have seen) in Mordaunt's countenance as he recognized the writing and broke the seal. When he had read the letter, his eyes fell upon the ground, and then, with a slight start, he lifted them up, and gazed long and eagerly around. Wistfully did he drink, as it were, into his heart the beautiful and expanded scene which lay stretched on either side: the noble avenue which his forefathers had planted as a shelter to their sons, and which now, in its majestic growth and its waving boughs, seemed to say, "Lo! ye are repaid!" and the never silent and silver stream, by which his boyhood had sat for hours, lulled

by its music, and inhaling the fragrance of the reed and wild flower that decoyed the bee to its glossy banks; and the deer, to whose melancholy *belling* he had listened so often in the gray twilight with a rapt and dreaming ear; and the green fern waving on the gentle hill, from whose shade his young feet had startled the hare and the infant fawn; and far and faintly gleaming through the thick trees, which clasped it as with a girdle, the old Hall, so associated with vague hopes and musing dreams, and the dim legends of gone time and the lofty prejudices of ancestral pride, — all seemed to sink within him, as he gazed, like the last looks of departing friends; and when Isabel, who had not dared to break a silence which partook so strongly of gloom, at length laid her hand upon his arm, and lifted her dark, deep, tender eyes to his, he said, as he drew her towards him, and a faint and sickly smile played upon his lips,—

“It is past, Isabel; henceforth we have no wealth but in each other. The cause has been decided, and — and — we are beggars!”

CHAPTER XXIX.

We expose our life to a quotidian ague of frigid impertinences, which would make a wise man tremble to think of. — COWLEY.

WE must suppose a lapse of four years from the date of those events which concluded the last chapter; and to recompense the reader who, I know, has a little *penchant* for "High Life," even in the last century, for having hitherto shown him human beings in a state of society not wholly artificial, I beg him to picture to himself a large room, brilliantly illuminated and crowded "with the magnates of the land." Here (some in saltatory motion, some in sedentary rest) are dispersed various groups of young ladies and attendant swains, talking upon the subject of Lord Rochester's celebrated poem, — namely, *Nothing!* — and lounging around the doors, meditating probably upon the same subject, stand those unhappy victims of dancing daughters, denominated "papas."

The music has ceased; the dancers have broken up, and there is a general but gentle sweep towards the refreshment-room. In the crowd — having just entered — there glided a young man of an air more distinguished and somewhat more joyous than the rest.

"How do you do, Mr. Linden?" said a tall and (though somewhat *passée*) very handsome woman, blaz- ing with diamonds; "are you just come?"

And here, by the way, I cannot resist pausing to observe that a friend of mine, meditating a novel, submitted a part of the MS. to a friendly publisher. "Sir,"

said the bookseller, "your book is very clever, but it wants dialogue."

"Dialogue?" cried my friend, — "you mistake: it is all dialogue."

"Ay, sir, but not what *we* call dialogue; we want a little conversation in fashionable life, — a little elegant chit chat or so; and as you must have seen so much of the *beau monde*, you could do it to the life. We must have something light and witty and entertaining."

"Light, witty, and entertaining!" said our poor friend; and how the deuce then is it to be like conversation in 'fashionable life'? When the very best conversation one can get is so insufferably dull, how do you think people will be amused by reading a copy of the very worst?"

"They *are* amused, sir," said the publisher, "and works of this kind *sell*!"

"I am convinced," said my friend; for he was a man of a placid temper. He took the hint, and his book did sell!

Now this anecdote rushed into my mind after the penning of the little address of the lady in diamonds, — "How do you do, Mr. Linden? Are you just come?" — and it received an additional weight from my utter inability to put into the mouth of Mr. Linden — notwithstanding my desire of representing him in the most brilliant colors — any more happy and eloquent answer than, "Only this instant!"

However, as this is in the true spirit of elegant dialogue, I trust my readers will find it as light, witty, and entertaining as, according to the said publisher, the said dialogue is always found by the public.

While Clarence was engaged in talking with this lady, a very pretty, lively, animated girl, with laughing blue

eyes, which, joined to the dazzling fairness of her complexion, gave a Hebe-like youth to her features and expression, was led up to the said lady by a tall young man, and consigned, with the ceremonious bow of the *vieille cour*, to her protection.

"Ah, Mr. Linden," cried the young lady, "I am very glad to see you, — such a beautiful ball! Everybody here that I most like. Have you had any refreshments, Mamma? But I need not ask, for I am sure you have not; do come, Mr. Linden will be our cavalier."

"Well, Flora, as you please," said the elder lady, with a proud and fond look at her beautiful daughter; and they proceeded to the refreshment-room.

No sooner were they seated at one of the tables than they were accosted by Lord St. George, a nobleman whom Clarence, before he left England, had met more than once at Mr. Talbot's.

"London," said his lordship to her of the diamonds, "has not seemed like the same place since Lady Westborough arrived; your presence brings out all the other luminaries; and therefore a young acquaintance of mine — God bless me, there he is, seated by Lady Flora — very justly called you 'the evening star.'"

"Was that Mr. Linden's pretty saying?" said Lady Westborough, smiling.

"It was," answered Lord St. George, — "and, by the by, he is a very sensible, pleasant person, and greatly improved since he left England last."

"What!" said Lady Westborough in a low tone (for Clarence, though in earnest conversation with Lady Flora, was within hearing), and making room for Lord St. George beside her, — "what! did *you* know him before he went to —? You can probably tell me, then,

who — that is to say — what family he is exactly of, — the Lindens of Devonshire, or — or — ”

“ Why, really,” said Lord St. George, a little confused, for no man likes to be acquainted with persons whose pedigree he cannot explain, “ I don’t know what may be his family. I met him at Talbot’s four or five years ago; he was then a mere boy, but he struck me as being very clever, and Talbot since told me that he was a nephew of his own.”

“ Talbot,” said Lady Westborough, musingly, — “ what Talbot ? ”

“ Oh! *the* Talbot, — the *ci-dévant* jeune homme ! ”

“ What, that charming, clever, animated old gentleman, who used to dress so oddly, and had been so celebrated a *beau garçon* in his day ? ”

“ Exactly so,” said Lord St. George, taking snuff, and delighted to find he had set his young acquaintance on so honorable a footing.

“ I did not know he was still alive,” said Lady Westborough; and then, turning her eyes towards Clarence and her daughter she added carelessly, “ Mr. Talbot is very rich, is he not ? ”

“ Rich as Cræsus,” replied Lord St. George, with a sigh.

“ And Mr. Linden is his heir, I suppose ? ”

“ In all probability,” answered Lord St. George; “ though I believe I can boast a distant relationship to Talbot. However, I could not make him fully understand it the other day, though I took particular pains to explain it.”

While this conversation was going on between the Marchioness of Westborough and Lord St. George, a dialogue equally interesting to the parties concerned, and, I hope, equally light, witty, and entertaining to

readers in general, was sustained between Clarence and Lady Flora.

"How long shall you stay in England?" asked the latter, looking down.

"I have not yet been able to decide," replied Clarence; "for it rests with the ministers, not me. Directly Lord Aspeden obtains another appointment, I am promised the office of Secretary of Legation; but till then I am

A captive in Augusta's towers,
To beauty and her train."

"Oh!" cried Lady Flora, laughing, "you mean Mrs. Desborough and her train; see where they sweep! Pray go and render her homage."

"It *is* rendered," said Linden, in a low voice, — "without so long a pilgrimage, but perhaps despised."

Lady Flora's laugh was hushed; the deepest blushes suffused her cheeks, and the whole character of that face, before so playful and joyous, seemed changed, as by a spell, into a grave, subdued, and even timid look.

Linden resumed, and his voice scarcely rose above a *whisper*. A whisper! O delicate and fairy sound! music that speaketh to the heart, as if loth to break the spell that binds it while it listens! Sigh breathed into words, and freighting love in tones languid, like homeward bees, by the very sweets with which they are charged!

"Do you remember," said he, "that evening at —, when we last parted, and the boldness which at that time you were gentle enough to forgive?"

Lady Flora replied not.

"And do you remember," continued Clarence, "that I told you that it was not as an unknown and obscure

adventurer, that I would *claim* the hand of her whose heart, as an adventurer, I had won?"

Lady Flora raised her eyes for one moment, and, encountering the ardent gaze of Clarence, as instantly dropped them.

"The time is not *yet* come," said Linden, "for the fulfilment of this promise; but may I — dare I hope, that when it does, I shall not be —"

"Flora, my love," said Lady Westborough, "let me introduce to you Lord Borodaile."

Lady Flora turned, — the spell was broken; and the lovers were instantly transformed into ordinary mortals. But, as Flora, after returning Lord Borodaile's address, glanced her eye towards Clarence, she was struck with the sudden and singular change of his countenance. The flush of youth and passion was fled, his complexion was deadly pale, and his eyes were fixed with a searching and unaccountable meaning upon the face of the young nobleman, who was alternately addressing, with a quiet and somewhat haughty fluency, the beautiful mother, and the more lovely though less commanding daughter. Directly Linden perceived that he was observed, he rose, turned away, and was soon lost among the crowd.

Lord Borodaile, the son and heir of the powerful Earl of Ulswater, was about the age of thirty, small, slight, and rather handsome than otherwise, though his complexion was dark and sallow, and a very aquiline nose gave a stern and somewhat severe air to his countenance. He had been for several years abroad, in various parts of the Continent, and (no other field for an adventurous and fierce spirit presenting itself) had served with the gallant Earl of Effingham, in the war between the Turks and Russians, as a volunteer in the armies of the latter. In this service he had been highly distinguished for

courage and conduct, and on his return to England about a twelvemonth since had obtained the command of a cavalry regiment. Passionately fond of his profession, he entered into its minutest duties with a zeal not exceeded by the youngest and poorest subaltern in the army.

His manners were very cold, haughty, collected, and self-possessed, and his conversation that of a man who has cultivated his intellect rather in the world than the closet. I mean that, perfectly ignorant of things, he was driven to converse solely upon persons, and having imbibed no other philosophy than that which worldly deceits and disappointments bestow, his remarks, though shrewd, were bitterly sarcastic, and partook of all the ill-nature for which a very scanty knowledge of the world gives a sour and malevolent mind so ready an excuse.

"How very disagreeable Lord Borodaile is!" said Lady Flora, when the object of the remark turned away, and rejoined some idlers of his corps.

"Disagreeable!" said Lady Westborough,— "I think him charming; he is so sensible. How true his remarks on the world are!"

Thus it is always: the young judge harshly of those who undeceive or revolt their enthusiasm; and the more advanced in years, who have not learned by a diviner wisdom to look upon the human follies and errors by which they have suffered with a pitying and lenient eye, consider every maxim of severity on those frailties as the proof of a superior knowledge, and praise that as a profundity of thought which in reality is but an infirmity of temper.

Clarence is now engaged in a *minuet de la cour*, with the beautiful Countess of —, the best dancer of the

day in England. Lady Flora is flirting with half-a-dozen *beaux*, the more violently in proportion as she observes the animation with which Clarence converses, and the grace with which his partner moves; and having thus left our two principal personages occupied and engaged, let us turn for a moment to a room which we have not entered.

This is a forlorn, deserted chamber, destined to cards, which are never played in this temple of Terpsichore. At the far end of this room, opposite to the fireplace, are seated four men, engaged in earnest conversation.

The tallest of these was Lord Quintown, a nobleman remarkable at that day for his personal advantages, his good fortune with the *beau sexe*, his attempts at parliamentary eloquence, in which he was lamentably unsuccessful, and his adherence to Lord North. Next to him sat Mr. St. George, the younger brother of Lord St. George, a gentleman to whom power and place seemed married without hope of divorce; for, whatever had been the changes of ministry for the last twelve years, he, secure in a lucrative, though subordinate situation, had "smiled at the whirlwind, and defied the storm," and while all things shifted and vanished round him, like clouds and vapors, had remained fixed and stationary as a star. "Solid St. George" was his appellation by his friends, and his enemies did not grudge him the title. The third was the minister for —; and the fourth was Clarence's friend, Lord Aspeden. Now this nobleman, blessed with a benevolent, smooth, calm countenance, valued himself especially upon his diplomatic elegance in turning a compliment.

Having a great taste for literature as well as diplomacy, this respected and respectable peer also possessed

a curious felicity for applying quotation; and nothing rejoiced him so much as when, in the same phrase, he was enabled to set the two jewels of his courtliness of flattery and his profundity of erudition. Unhappily enough, his compliments were seldom as well taken as they were meant; and, whether from the ingratitude of the persons complimented, or the ill-fortune of the noble adulator, seemed sometimes to produce indignation in place of delight. It has been said that his civilities had cost Lord Aspeden four duels and one beating; but these reports were probably the malicious invention of those who had never tasted the delicacies of his flattery.

Now these four persons being all members of the Privy Council, and being thus engaged in close and earnest conference, were, you will suppose, employed in discussing the gravities and secrets of state,—no such thing: that whisper from Lord Quintown, the handsome nobleman, to Mr. St. George, is no hoarded and valuable information which would rejoice the heart of the editor of an opposition paper, no direful murmur, “perplexing monarchs with the dread of change;” it is only a recent piece of scandal, touching the virtue of a lady of the court, which (albeit the sage listener seems to pay so devout an attention to the news) is far more interesting to the gallant and handsome informant than to his brother statesman; and that emphatic and vehement tone with which Lord Aspeden is assuring the minister for — of some fact, is merely an angry denunciation of the chicanery practised at the last Newmarket.

“By the by, Aspeden,” said Lord Quintown, “who is that good-looking fellow always flirting with Lady Flora Ardenne, — an *attaché* of yours, is he not?”

“Oh! Linden, I suppose you mean. A very sensible,

VOL. I. — 14

clever young fellow who has a great genius for business, and plays the flute admirably. I must have him for my secretary, my dear lord, mind that."

"With such a recommendation, Lord Aspeden," said the minister, with a bow, "the state would be a great loser did it not elect your *attaché*, who plays so admirably on the flute, to the office of your secretary. Let us join the dancers."

"I shall go and talk with Count B——," quoth Mr. St. George.

"And I shall make my court to his beautiful wife," said the minister, sauntering into the ball-room, to which his fine person and graceful manner were much better adapted than was his genius to the cabinet, or his eloquence to the senate.

The morning had long dawned, and Clarence, for whose mind pleasure was more fatiguing than business, lingered near the door, to catch one last look of Lady Flora before he retired. He saw her leaning on the arm of Lord Borodaile, and hastening to join the dancers, with her usual light step and laughing air; for Clarence's short conference with her had, in spite of his subsequent flirtations, rendered her happier than she had ever felt before. Again a change passed over Clarence's countenance, — a change which I find it difficult to express without borrowing from those celebrated German dramatists who could portray in such exact colors "a look of mingled joy, sorrow, hope, passion, rapture, and despair;" for the look was not that of jealousy alone, although it certainly partook of its nature, but a little also of interest, and a little of sorrow; and when he turned away, and slowly descended the stairs, his eyes were full of tears, and his thoughts far, far away, — whither?

CHAPTER XXX.

Quæ fert adolescentia
Ea ne me celet consuefeci filium.¹

TERENT.

THE next morning Clarence was lounging over his breakfast, and glancing listlessly now at the pages of the newspapers, now at the various engagements for the week, which lay confusedly upon his table, when he received a note from Talbot, requesting to see him as soon as possible.

"Had it not been for that man," said Clarence to himself, "what should I have been now? But, at least, I have not disgraced his friendship. I have already ascended the roughest, because the lowest steps on the hill where Fortune builds her temple. I have already won for the name I have chosen some 'golden opinions,' to gild its obscurity. One year more may confirm my destiny, and ripen hope into success; then—then, I may perhaps throw off a disguise that, while it befriended, has not degraded me, and avow myself to *her*! Yet how much better to dignify the name I have assumed, than to owe respect only to that which I have not been deemed worthy to inherit. Well, well, these are bitter thoughts; let me turn to others. How beautiful Flora looked last night! and, *he*—*he*—but enough of this. I must dress, and then to Talbot."

Muttering these wayward fancies, Clarence rose, completed his toilet, sent for his horses, and repaired to a

¹ The things which youth proposes I accustomed my son that he should never conceal from me.

village about seven miles from London, where Talbot, having yielded to Clarence's fears and solicitations, and left his former insecure tenement, now resided under the guard and care of an especial and private watchman.

It was a pretty, quiet villa, surrounded by a plantation and pleasure-ground of some extent for a suburban residence, in which the old philosopher (for though, in some respects, still frail and prejudiced, Talbot deserved that name) held his home. The ancient servant, on whom four years had passed lightly and favoringly, opened the door to Clarence, with his usual smile of greeting, and familiar yet respectful salutation, and ushered our hero into a room furnished with the usual fastidious and rather feminine luxury which characterized Talbot's tastes. Sitting with his back turned to the light, in a large easy-chair, Clarence found the wreck of the once gallant, gay Lothario.

There was not much alteration in his countenance since we last saw him: the lines, it is true, were a little more decided, and the cheeks a little more sunken, but the dark eye beamed with all its wonted vivacity, and the delicate contour of the mouth preserved all its physiognomical characteristics of the inward man. He rose with somewhat more difficulty than he was formerly wont to do, and his limbs had lost much of their symmetrical proportions; yet the kind clasp of his hand was as firm and warm as when it had pressed that of the boyish *attaché* four years since; and the voice which expressed his salutation, yet breathed its unconquered suavity and distinctness of modulation. After the customary greetings and inquiries were given and returned, the young man drew his chair near to Talbot's, and said, —

“ You sent for me, dear sir; have you anything more

important than usual to impart to me! or — and I hope *this* is the case — have you at last thought of any commission, however trifling, in the execution of which I can be of use?”

“Yes, Clarence, I wish your judgment to select me some strawberries, — you know that I am a great epicure in fruit, — and get me the new work Dr. Johnson has just published. There, are you contented? And now, tell me all about your horse, — does he step well? Has he the true English head and shoulder? Are his legs fine, yet strong? Is he full of spirit and devoid of vice?”

“He is all this, sir, thanks to you for him.”

“Ah!” cried Talbot, —

“Old as I am, for riding feats unfit,
The shape of horses I remember yet.

And now let us hear how you like Ranelagh; and above all how you liked the ball last night?”

And the vivacious old man listened with the profoundest appearance of interest to all the particulars of Clarence's animated detail. His vanity, which made him wish to be loved, had long since taught him the surest method of becoming so; and with him every visitor, old, young, the man of books, or the disciple of the world, was sure to find the readiest and even eagerest sympathy in every amusement or occupation. But for Clarence, this interest lay deeper than in the surface of courtly breeding. Gratitude had first bound to him his adopted son, then a tie, yet unexplained, and lastly, but not least, the pride of protection. He was vain of the personal and mental attractions of his *protégé*, and eager for the success of one whose honors would reflect credit on himself.

But there was one part of Clarence's account of the last night to which the philosopher paid a still deeper attention, and on which he was more minute in his advice; what this was, I cannot, as yet, reveal to the reader.

The conversation then turned on light and general matters, — the scandal, the literature, the politics, the *on dits* of the day; and lastly upon women; thence Talbot dropped into his office of Mentor.

"A celebrated cardinal said, very wisely, that few ever did anything among men until women were no longer an object to them. That is the reason, by the by, why I never succeeded with the former, and why people seldom acquire any reputation except for a hat, or a horse, till they marry. Look round at the various occupations of life. How few bachelors are eminent in any of them! So you see, Clarence, you will have my leave to marry Lady Flora as soon as you please."

Clarence colored, and rose to depart. Talbot followed him to the door, and then said in a careless way, "By the by, I had almost forgotten to tell you that, as you have now many new expenses, you will find the yearly sum you have hitherto received doubled. To give you this information is the chief reason why I sent for you this morning. God bless you, my dear boy."

And Talbot shut the door, despite his politeness, in the face and thanks of his adopted son.

CHAPTER XXXI.

There is a great difference between seeking to raise a laugh from everything, and seeking in everything what justly may be laughed at. — LORD SHAFTESBURY.

BEHOLD our hero, now in the zenith of distinguished dissipations! Courteous, attentive, and animated, the women did not esteem him the less for admiring them rather than himself; while by the gravity of his demeanor to men, the eloquent yet unpretending flow of his conversation whenever topics of intellectual interest were discussed, the plain and solid sense which he threw into his remarks, and the avidity with which he courted the society of all distinguished for literary or political eminence, he was silently, but surely, establishing himself in esteem as well as popularity, and laying the certain foundation of future honor and success.

Thus, although he had only been four months returned to England, he was already known and courted in every circle, and universally spoken of as among "the most rising young gentlemen" whom fortune and the administration had marked for their own. His history, during the four years in which we have lost sight of him, is briefly told.

He soon won his way into the good graces of Lord Aspenden, became his private secretary, and occasionally his confidant. Universally admired for his attraction of form and manner, and, though aiming at reputation, not averse to pleasure, he had that position which fashion confers at the Court of —, when Lady West-

borough and her beautiful daughter, then only seventeen, came to —, in the progress of a Continental tour, about a year before his return to England. Clarence and Lady Flora were naturally brought much together in the restricted circle of a small court, and intimacy soon ripened into attachment.

Lord Aspeden being recalled, Clarence accompanied him to England; and the ex-minister, really liking much one who was so useful to him, had faithfully promised to procure him the office and honor of secretary whenever his lordship should be reappointed minister.

Three intimate acquaintances had Clarence Linden. The one was the Honorable Henry Trollolop, the second Mr. Callythorpe, and the third Sir Christopher Findlater. We will sketch them to you in an instant. Mr. Trollolop was a short, stout gentleman, with a very thoughtful countenance, — that is to say, he wore spectacles, and took snuff. Mr. Trollolop — we delight in pronouncing that soft, liquid name — was eminently distinguished by a love of metaphysics. Metaphysics were in a great measure the order of the day; but fate had endowed Mr. Trollolop with a singular and felicitous confusion of idea. Reid, Berkeley, Cudworth, Hobbes, all lay jumbled together in most edifying chaos at the bottom of Mr. Trollolop's capacious mind; and whenever he opened his mouth, the imprisoned enemies came rushing and scrambling out, overturning and contradicting each other, in a manner quite astounding to the ignorant spectator. Mr. Callythorpe was meagre, thin, sharp, and yellow. Whether from having a great propensity for nailing stray acquaintances, or being particularly heavy company, or from any other cause better known to the wits of the period than to us, he was

occasionally termed by his friends, the "yellow ham-mer." The peculiar characteristics of this gentleman were his sincerity and friendship. These qualities led him into saying things the most disagreeable, with the civilest and coolest manner in the world, — always pre-facing them with, "You know, my dear so-and-so, *I* am your true friend." If this proof of amity was now and then productive of altercation, Mr. Callythorpe, who was a great patriot, had another and a nobler plea, — "Sir," he would say, putting his hand to his heart, — "sir, I'm an Englishman: I know not what it is to feign." Of a very different stamp was Sir Christopher Findlater. Little cared he for the subtleties of the human mind, and not much more for the disagreeable duties of "an Englishman." Honest and jovial, red in the cheeks, empty in the head, born to twelve thousand a year, educated in the country, and heir to an earldom, Sir Christopher Findlater piqued himself, notwithstanding his worldly advantages, usually so destructive to the kindlier affections, on having the best heart in the world, and this good heart having a very bad head to regulate and support it, was the perpetual cause of error to the owner and evil to the public.

One evening, when Clarence was alone in his rooms, Mr. Trollolop entered.

"My dear Linden," said the visitor, "how are you?"

"I am, as I hope you are, very well," answered Clarence.

"The human mind," said Trollolop, taking off his greatcoat, — "Sir Christopher Findlater, and Mr. Callythorpe, sir," said the valet.

"Pshaw! What has Sir Christopher Findlater to do with the human mind?" muttered Mr. Trollolop.

Sir Christopher entered with a swagger and a laugh.

"Well, old fellow, how do you do? Deuced cold this evening."

"Though it *is* an evening in May," observed Clarence; "but then, this cursed climate!"

"Climate!" interrupted Mr. Callythorpe, "it is the best climate in the world; I am an Englishman, and I never abuse my country."

England, with all thy faults, I love thee still."

"As to climate," said Trollolop, "there is no climate, neither here nor elsewhere. The climate is in your mind, the chair is in your mind, and the table too, though I daresay you are stupid enough to think the two latter are in the room; the human mind, my dear Findlater —"

"Don't *mind* me, Trollolop," cried the baronet, "I can't bear your clever heads; give me a good heart, — that's worth all the heads in the world, d—n me if it is not! Eh, Linden?"

"Your good heart," cried Trollolop, in a passion (for all your self-called philosophers are a little choleric), — "your good heart is all cant and nonsense, there is no heart at all: we are all mind."

"I'll be hanged if I'm all mind," said the baronet.

"At least," quoth Linden, gravely, "no one ever accused you of it before."

"We are all mind," pursued the reasoner, — "we are all mind, *un moulin à raisonnement*. Our ideas are derived from two sources, sensation or memory. That neither our thoughts, nor passions, nor ideas formed by the imagination, exist without the mind, everybody will allow;¹ therefore, you see, the human mind is — in short, there is nothing *in* the world but the human mind!"

¹ BERKELEY: *Principles of Human Knowledge*, sect. iii.

"Nothing could be better demonstrated," said Clarence.

"I don't believe it," quoth the baronet.

"But you do believe it, and you must believe it," cried Trollop; "for, 'the Supreme Being has implanted within us the principle of credulity,' and therefore you do believe it."

"But I don't," cried Sir Christopher.

"You are mistaken," replied the metaphysician, calmly; "because I *must* speak truth."

"Why must you, pray?" said the baronet.

"Because," answered Trollop, taking snuff, "there is a principle of veracity implanted in our nature."

"I wish I were a metaphysician," said Clarence, with a sigh.

"I am glad to hear you say so; for you know, my dear Linden," said Callythorpe, "that I am your true friend, and I must therefore tell you that you are shamefully ignorant. You are not offended?"

"Not at all!" said Clarence, trying to smile.

"And you, my dear Findlater" (turning to the baronet), "you know that I wish you well,—you know that I never flatter, I'm your real friend, so you must not be angry; but you really are not considered a Solomon."

"Mr. Callythorpe!" exclaimed the baronet, in a rage (the best-hearted people can't always bear truth), "what do you mean?"

"You must not be angry, my good sir,—you must not, really. I can't help telling you of your faults; for I am a true Briton, sir, a true Briton, and leave lying to slaves and Frenchmen."

"You are in an error," said Trollop; "Frenchmen don't lie, at least not naturally, for in the human mind,

as I before said, the Divine Author has implanted a principle of veracity which — ”

“ My dear sir,” interrupted Callythorpe, very affectionately, “ you remind me of what people say of *you*. ”

“ Memory may be reduced to sensation, since it is only a weaker sensation,” quoth Trollolop; “ but proceed. ”

“ You know, Trollolop,” said Callythorpe, in a singularly endearing intonation of voice, — “ you know that I never flatter; flattery is unbecoming a true friend, — nay, more, it is unbecoming a native of our happy isles, and people do say of you that you know nothing whatsoever, no, not an iota, of all that nonsensical, worthless philosophy, of which you are always talking. Lord St. George said the other day ‘ that you were very conceited. ’ ‘ No, not conceited, ’ replied Dr. —, ‘ only ignorant; ’ so if I were you, Trollolop, I would cut metaphysics, — you ’re not offended? ”

“ By no means,” cried Trollolop, foaming at the mouth.

“ For my part,” said the good-hearted Sir Christopher, whose wrath had now subsided, rubbing his hands, — “ for my part, I see no good in any of those things. I never read, — never, — and I don’t see how I ’m a bit the worse for it. A good man, Linden, in my opinion, only wants to do his duty, and that is very easily done. ”

“ A good man! — and what is good? ” cried the metaphysician, triumphantly. “ Is it implanted within us? Hobbes, according to Reid, who is our last and consequently best philosopher, endeavors to demonstrate that there is no difference between right and wrong. ”

“ I have no idea of what you mean,” cried Sir Christopher.

“ Idea! ” exclaimed the pious philosopher. “ Sir give me leave to tell you that no solid proof has ever

been advanced of the existence of ideas; they are a mere fiction and hypothesis. Nay, sir, 'hence arises that scepticism which disgraces our philosophy of the mind.' Ideas! — Findlater, you are a sceptic and an idealist."

"I?" cried the affrighted baronet; "upon my honor I am no such thing. Everybody knows that I am a Christian, and —"

"Ah!" interrupted Callythorpe, with a solemn look, "everybody knows that you are not one of those horrid persons, — those atrocious deists and atheists and sceptics from whom the church and freedom of old England have suffered such danger. I am a true Briton of the good old school; and I confess, Mr. Trollolop, that I do not like to hear any opinions but the right ones."

"Right ones, being only those which Mr. Callythorpe professes," said Clarence.

"Exactly so!" rejoined Mr. Callythorpe.

"The human mind —" commenced Mr. Trollolop, stirring the fire; when Clarence, who began to be somewhat tired of this conversation, rose. "You will excuse me," said he, "but I am particularly engaged, and it is time to dress. Harrison will get you tea, or whatever else you are inclined for."

"The human mind —" renewed Trollolop, not heeding the interruption; and Clarence forthwith left the room.

CHAPTER XXXII.

You blame Marcius for being proud. — *Coriolanus*.

Here is another fellow, a marvellous pretty hand at fashioning a compliment. — *The Tanner of Tyburn*.

THERE was a brilliant ball at Lady T——'s, a personage who, every one knows, did, in the year 17—, give the best balls, and have the best-dressed people at them, in London. It was about half-past twelve when Clarence, released from his three friends, arrived at the countess's. When he entered, the first thing which struck him was Lord Borodaile in close conversation with Lady Flora.

Clarence paused for a few moments, and then, sauntering towards them, caught Flora's eye, colored, and advanced. Now, if there was a haughty man in Europe, it was Lord Borodaile. He was not proud of his birth or fortune, but he was proud of himself; and, next to that pride, he was proud of being a gentleman. He had an exceeding horror of all common people,—a Claverhouse-sort of supreme contempt to "puddle blood." His lip seemed to wear scorn as a garment; a lofty and stern self-admiration, rather than self-love, sat upon his forehead as on a throne. He had, as it were, an awe of himself; his thoughts were so many mirrors of Viscount Borodaile, dressed *en dieu*. His mind was a little Versailles, in which *self* sat like Louis XIV., and saw nothing but pictures of *its* self, sometimes as Jupiter, and sometimes as Apollo. What marvel, then, that Lord Borodaile was a very unpleasant companion; for

every human being he had "something of contempt." His eye was always eloquent in disdaining: to the plebeian it said, "You are not a gentleman;" to the prince, "You are not Lord Borodaile."

Yet, with all this, he had his good points. He was brave as a lion, strictly honorable, and, though very ignorant and very self-sufficient, had that sort of dogged good sense which one very often finds in men of stern hearts, who, if they have many prejudices, have little feeling to overcome.

Very stiffly and very haughtily did Lord Borodaile draw up when Clarence approached and addressed Lady Flora; much more stiffly and much more haughtily did he return, though with old-fashioned precision of courtesy, Clarence's bow, when Lady Westborough introduced them to each other. Not that this hauteur was intended as a particular affront; it was only the agreeability of his lordship's *general* manner.

"Are you engaged?" said Clarence to Flora.

"I am, at present, to Lord Borodaile."

"After him, may I hope?"

Lady Flora nodded assent, and disappeared with Lord Borodaile.

His Royal Highness the Duke of — came up to Lady Westborough; and Clarence, with a smiling countenance and an absent heart, plunged into the crowd. There he met Lord Aspeden, in conversation with the Earl of Holdenworth, one of the administration.

"Ah, Linden!" said the diplomatist, "let me introduce you to Lord Holdenworth, — a clever young man, my dear lord, and plays the flute beautifully." With this eulogium, Lord Aspeden glided away; and Lord Holdenworth, after some conversation with Linden, honored him by an invitation to dinner the next day.

CHAPTER XXXIII.

'T is true his nature may with faults abound ;
But who will cavil when *the heart* is sound ?

STEPHEN MONTAGUE.

Dum vitant stulti vitia, in contraria currunt.¹ — HOR.

THE next day Sir Christopher Findlater called on Clarence. "Let us lounge into the park," said he.

"With pleasure," replied Clarence; and into the park they lounged.

By the way they met a crowd, who were hurrying a man to prison. The good-hearted Sir Christopher stopped: "Who is that poor fellow?" said he.

"It is the celebrated" (in England all criminals are celebrated. Thurtell was a hero, Thistlewood a patriot, and Fauntleroy was discovered to be exactly like Buonaparte!), — "it is the celebrated robber, John Jefferies, who broke into Mrs. Wilson's house, and cut the throats of herself and her husband, wounded the maid-servant, and split the child's skull with the poker."

Clarence pressed forward: "I have seen that man before," thought he. He looked again, and recognized the face of the robber who had escaped from Talbot's house, on the eventful night which had made Clarence's fortune. It was a strongly-marked and rather handsome countenance, which would not be easily forgotten; and a single circumstance of excitement will stamp features on the memory as deeply as the commonplace intercourse of years.

¹ The foolish while avoiding vice run into the opposite extremes.

"John Jefferies!" exclaimed the baronet, "let us come away.

"Linden," continued Sir Christopher, "that fellow was my servant once. He robbed me to some considerable extent. I caught him. He appealed to my heart, and you know, my dear fellow, that was irresistible, so I let him off. Who could have thought he would have turned out so?" And the baronet proceeded to eulogize his own good-nature, by which it is just necessary to remark that one miscreant had been saved for a few years from transportation, in order to rob and murder *ad libitum*, and having fulfilled the office of a common pest, to suffer on the gallows at last. What a fine thing it is to have a good heart!

Both our gentlemen now sunk into a reverie, from which they were awakened, at the entrance of the park, by a young man in rags, who, with a piteous tone, supplicated charity. Clarence, who, to his honor be it spoken, had spent an allotted and considerable part of his income in judicious and laborious benevolence, and had read a little of political morals, then beginning to be understood, walked on. The good-hearted baronet put his hand in his pocket and gave the beggar half a guinea, by which a young, strong man, who had only just commenced the trade, was confirmed in his imposition for the rest of his life, and, instead of the useful support, became the pernicious encumbrance of society.

Sir Christopher had now recovered his spirits. "What's like a good action?" said he to Clarence, with a swelling breast.

The park was crowded to excess; our loungers were joined by Lord St. George. His lordship was a stanch Tory. He could not endure Wilkes, liberty, or general

education. He launched out against the enlightenment of domestics.¹

"What has made you so bitter?" said Sir Christopher.

"My valet," cried Lord St. George, — "he has invented a new toasting-fork, is going to take out a patent, make his fortune, *and leave me*; that's what I call ingratitude, Sir Christopher; for I ordered his wages to be raised five pounds but last year."

"It *was* very ungrateful," said the ironical Clarence.

"Very!" reiterated the good-hearted Sir Christopher.

"You cannot recommend me a valet, Findlater," renewed his lordship, "a good, honest, sensible fellow, who can neither read nor write?"

"N-o-o; that is to say, yes! I can; my old servant, Collard, is out of place, and is as ignorant as — as —"

"I — or you are?" said Lord St. George, with a laugh.

"Precisely," replied the baronet.

"Well, then, I take your recommendation; send him to me to-morrow at twelve."

"I will," said Sir Christopher.

"My dear Findlater," cried Clarence, when Lord St. George was gone; "did you not tell me, some time ago, that Collard was a great rascal, and very intimate with Jefferies? — and now you recommend him to Lord St. George!"

"Hush, hush, hush!" said the baronet; "he was a great rogue to be sure; but, poor fellow, he came to me

¹ The ancestors of our present footmen, if we may believe Sir William Temple, seem to have been to the full as intellectual as their descendants. "I have had," observes the philosophic statesman, "several servants far gone in divinity, others in poetry, have known in the families of some friends, a keeper deep in the Rosicrucian mysteries, and a laundress firm in those of Epicurus."

yesterday, with tears in his eyes, and said he should starve if I would not give him a character; so what could I do?"

"At least, tell Lord St. George the truth," observed Clarence.

"But then Lord St. George would not take him!" rejoined the good-hearted Sir Christopher, with forcible *naïveté*. "No, no, Linden, we must not be so hard-hearted: we must forgive and forget;" and, so saying, the baronet threw out his chest with the conscious exultation of a man who has uttered a noble sentiment. The moral of this little history is, that Lord St. George, having been pillaged "through thick and thin," as the proverb has it, for two years, at last missed a gold watch, and Monsieur Collard finished his career as his exemplary tutor, Mr. John Jefferies, had done before him. Ah! what a fine thing it is to have a good heart.

But to return: just as our wanderers had arrived at the farther end of the park, Lady Westborough and her daughter passed them. Clarence, excusing himself to his friend, hastened towards them, and was soon occupied in saying the prettiest things in the world to the prettiest person, at least in his eyes; while Sir Christopher, having done as much mischief as a good heart well can do in a walk of an hour, returned home to write a long letter to his mother, against "learning, and all such nonsense, which only served to blunt the affections and harden the heart."

"Admirable young man!" cried the mother, with tears in her eyes. "A good heart is better than all the heads in the world."

Amen.

CHAPTER XXXIV.

"Make way, Sir Geoffrey Peveril, or you will compel me to do that I may be sorry for!"

"You shall make no way here but at your peril," said Sir Geoffrey; "this is my ground." — *Peveril of the Peak*.

ONE night, on returning home from a party at Lady Westborough's, in Hanover Square, Clarence observed a man before him walking with an uneven and agitated step. His right hand was clenched, and he frequently raised it as with a sudden impulse, and struck fiercely as if at some imagined enemy.

The stranger slackened his pace. Clarence passed him, and turning round to satisfy the idle curiosity which the man's eccentric gestures had provoked, his eye met a dark, lowering, iron countenance, which, despite the lapse of four years, he recognized on the moment, — it was Wolfe, the republican.

Clarence moved, involuntarily, with a quicker step; but in a few minutes, Wolfe, who was vehemently talking to himself, once more passed him: the direction he took was also Clarence's way homeward, and he therefore followed the republican, though at some slight distance, and on the opposite side of the way. A gentleman on foot, apparently returning from a party, met Wolfe, and, with an air, half haughty, half unconscious, took the wall; though, according to old-fashioned rules of street courtesy, he was on the wrong side for asserting the claim. The stern republican started, drew himself up to his full height, and sturdily and doggedly placed

himself directly in the way of the unjust claimant. Clarence was now nearly opposite to the two, and saw all that was going on.

With a motion, a little rude and very contemptuous, the passenger attempted to put Wolfe aside, and win his path. Little did he know of the unyielding nature he had to do with; the next instant the republican, with a strong hand, forced him from the pavement into the very kennel, and silently and coldly continued his way.

The wrath of the discomfited passenger was vehemently kindled.

"Insolent dog," cried he, in a loud and arrogant tone, "your baseness is your protection." Wolfe turned rapidly, and made but two strides before he was once more by the side of his defeated opponent.

"What did you say?" he asked, in his low, deep, hoarse voice.

Clarence stopped. "There will be mischief done here," thought he, as he called to mind the stern temper of the republican.

"Merely," said the other, struggling with his rage, "that it is not for men of my rank to avenge the insults offered us by those of yours!"

"Your rank," said Wolfe, bitterly retorting the contempt of the stranger, in a tone of the loftiest disdain, — "your rank, poor changeling! And what are you, that you should lord it over me? Are your limbs stronger, your muscles firmer, your proportions juster, your mind acuter, your conscience clearer? Fool, fool, — go home and measure yourself with lackies!"

The republican ceased, and pushing the stranger aside, turned slowly away. But this last insult enraged the passenger beyond all prudence. Before Wolfe had proceeded two paces, he muttered a desperate but brief

oath, and struck the reformer with a strength so much beyond what his figure (which was small and slight) appeared to possess, that the powerful and gaunt frame of Wolfe recoiled backward several steps, and had it not been for the iron railing of the neighboring area, would have fallen to the ground.

Clarence pressed forward: the face of the rash aggressor was turned towards him; the features were Lord Boro-daile's. He had scarcely time to make this discovery, before Wolfe had recovered himself. With a wild and savage cry, rather than exclamation, he threw himself upon his antagonist, twined his sinewy arms round the frame of the struggling, but powerless, nobleman, raised him in the air, with the easy strength of a man lifting a child, held him aloft for one moment, with a bitter and scornful laugh of wrathful derision, and then dashed him to the ground, and, planting his foot upon Boro-daile's breast, said, —

"So shall it be with all of you: there shall be but one instant between your last offence and your first but final debasement. Lie there! it is your proper place! By the only law which you yourself acknowledge, the law which gives the right divine to the strongest, if you stir limb or muscle, I will crush the breath from your body!"

But Clarence was now by the side of Wolfe, a new and more powerful opponent.

"Look you," said he: "you have received an insult, and you have done justice yourself. I condemn the offence, and quarrel not with you for the punishment; but that punishment is now past. Remove your foot, or —"

"What!" shouted Wolfe, fiercely, his lurid and vindictive eye flashing with the released fire of long-pent and cherished passions.

"Or," answered Clarence, calmly, "I will hinder you from committing murder."

At that instant the watchman's voice was heard, and the night's guardian himself was seen hastening from the far end of the street towards the place of contest. Whether this circumstance, or Clarence's answer, somewhat changed the current of the republican's thoughts, or whether his anger, suddenly raised, was now as suddenly subsiding, it is not easy to decide; but he slowly and deliberately moved his foot from the breast of his baffled foe, and, bending down, seemed endeavoring to ascertain the mischief he had done. Lord Borodaile was perfectly insensible.

"You have killed him!" cried Clarence, in a voice of horror, "but you shall not escape;" and he placed a desperate and nervous hand on the republican.

"Stand off," said Wolfe, "my blood is up! I would not do more violence to-night than I have done. Stand off! the man moves; see!"

And Lord Borodaile, uttering a long sigh, and attempting to rise, Clarence released his hold of the republican, and bent down to assist the fallen nobleman. Meanwhile, Wolfe, muttering to himself, turned from the spot, and strode haughtily away.

The watchman now came up, and, with his aid, Clarence raised Lord Borodaile. Bruised, stunned, half insensible as he was, that personage lost none of his characteristic stateliness; he shook off the watchman's arm, as if there was contamination in the touch; and his countenance, still menacing and defying in its expression, turned abruptly towards Clarence, as if he yet expected to meet, and struggle with a foe.

"How are you, my lord?" said Linden; "not severely hurt, I trust?"

"Well, quite well," cried Borodaile. "Mr. Linden, I think? — I thank you cordially for your assistance; but the dog, — the rascal, — where is he?"

"Gone," said Clarence.

"Gone! Where, where?" cried Borodaile; "that living man should insult me, and yet escape!"

"Which way did the fellow go?" said the watchman, anticipative of half a crown. "I will run after him in a trice, your honor, — *I* warrant I nab him."

"No — no," said Borodaile, haughtily; "I leave my quarrels to no man; if I could not master him myself, no one else shall do it for me. Mr. Linden, excuse me, but I am perfectly recovered, and can walk very well without your polite assistance. Mr. Watchman, I am obliged to you; there is a guinea to reward your trouble."

With these words, intended as a farewell, the proud patrician, smothering his pain, bowed with extreme courtesy to Clarence, again thanked him, and walked on unaided and alone.

"He is a game blood," said the watchman, pocketing the guinea.

"He is worthy his name," thought Clarence; "though he was in the wrong, my heart yearns to him."

CHAPTER XXXV.

Things wear a vizard which I think to like not.

Tanner of Tyburn.

CLARENCE, from that night, appeared to have formed a sudden attachment to Lord Borodaile. He took every opportunity of cultivating his intimacy, and invariably treated him with a degree of consideration which his knowledge of the world told him was well calculated to gain the goodwill of his haughty and arrogant acquaintance; but all this was ineffectual in conquering Borodaile's coldness and reserve. To have been once seen in a humiliating and degrading situation is quite sufficient to make a proud man hate the spectator, and, with the confusion of all prejudiced minds, to transfer the sore remembrance of the event to the association of the witness. Lord Borodaile, though always ceremoniously civil, was immovably distant, and avoided, as well as he was able, Clarence's insinuating approaches and address. To add to his indisposition to increase his acquaintance with Linden, a friend of his, a captain in the Guards, once asked him who that Mr. Linden was; and on his lordship replying that he did not know, Mr. Percy Bobus, the son of a wine-merchant, though the nephew of a duke, rejoined, "*Nobody does know.*"

"Insolent intruder!" thought Lord Borodaile; "a man whom nobody knows to make such advances to *me*!"

A still greater cause of dislike to Clarence arose from jealousy. Ever since the first night of his acquaintance

with Lady Flora, Lord Borodaile had paid her unceasing attention. In good earnest, he was greatly struck by her beauty, and had for the last year meditated the necessity of presenting the world with a Lady Borodaile. Now, though his lordship did look upon himself in as favorable a light as a man well can do, yet he could not but own that Clarence *was* very handsome, had a devilish gentleman-like air, talked with a better grace than the generality of young men, and danced to perfection. "I detest that fellow!" said Lord Borodaile, involuntarily and aloud, as these unwilling truths forced themselves upon his mind.

"Whom do you detest?" asked Mr. Percy Bobus, who was lying on the sofa in Lord Borodaile's drawing-room, and admiring a pair of red-heeled shoes which decorated his feet.

"That puppy, Linden!" said Lord Borodaile, adjusting his cravat.

"He *is* a deuced puppy, certainly!" rejoined Mr. Percy Bobus, turning round in order to contemplate more exactly the shape of his right shoe. "I can't bear conceit, Borodaile."

"Nor I: I abhor it,—it is so d—d disgusting!" replied Lord Borodaile, leaning his chin upon his two hands, and looking full into the glass. "Do you use MacNeile's divine pomatum?"

"No, it's too hard; I get mine from Paris. Shall I send you some?"

"Do," said Lord Borodaile.

"Mr. Linden, my lord," said the servant, throwing open the door; and Clarence entered.

"I am very fortunate," said he, with that smile which so few ever resisted, "to find you at home, Lord Borodaile; but as the day was wet, I thought I should have

some chance of that pleasure; I therefore wrapped myself up in my roquelaure and here I am!"

Now, nothing could be more diplomatic than the compliment of choosing a wet day for a visit, and exposing one's self to the "pitiless shower," for the greater probability of finding the person visited at home. Not so thought Lord Borodaile; he drew himself up, bowed very solemnly, and said, with cold gravity, —

"You are very obliging, *Mr. Linden.*"

Clarence colored, and bit his lip as he seated himself. Mr. Percy Bobus, with true insular breeding, took up the newspaper.

"I think I saw you at Lady C.'s last night," said Clarence; "did you stay there long?"

"No, indeed," answered Borodaile; "I hate her parties."

"One *does* meet such odd people there," observed Mr. Percy Bobus; "creatures one never sees anywhere else."

"I hear," said Clarence, who never abused any one, even the givers of stupid parties, if he could help it, and therefore thought it best to change the conversation, — "I hear, Lord Borodaile, that some hunters of yours are to be sold. I purpose being a bidder for Thunderbolt."

"I have a horse to sell you, Mr. Linden," cried Mr. Percy Bobus, springing from the sofa into civility; "a superb creature."

"Thank you," said Clarence, laughing; "but I can only afford to buy *one*, and I have taken a great fancy to Thunderbolt."

Lord Borodaile, whose manners were very antiquated in their affability, bowed. Mr. Bobus sank back into his sofa and resumed the paper.

A pause ensued. Clarence was chilled in spite of himself. Lord Borodaile played with a paper-cutter.

"Have you been to Lady Westborough's lately?" said Clarence, breaking silence.

"I was there last night," replied Lord Borodaile.

"Indeed!" cried Clarence. "I wonder I did not see you there, for I dined with them."

Lord Borodaile's hair curled of itself. "*He* dined there, and I only asked in the evening," thought he; but his sarcastic temper suggested a very different reply.

"Ah," said he, elevating his eyebrows, "Lady Westborough told me she had had some people to dinner, whom she had been *obliged* to ask. Bobus, is that the 'Public Advertiser'? See whether that d—d fellow Junius has been writing any more of his venomous letters."

Clarence was not a man apt to take offence, but he felt his bile rise, — "It will not do to show it," thought he; so he made some further remark in a jesting vein; and after a very ill-sustained conversation of some minutes longer, rose, apparently in the best humor possible, and departed, with a solemn intention never again to enter the house. Thence he went to Lady Westborough's.

The marchioness was in her boudoir. Clarence was, as usual, admitted; for Lady Westborough loved amusement above all things in the world, and Clarence had the art of affording it better than any young man of her acquaintance. On entering, he saw Lady Flora hastily retreating through an opposite door. She turned her face towards him for one moment, — that moment was sufficient to freeze his blood; the large tears were rolling down her cheeks, which were as white as death, and the expression of those features, usually so laughing and joyous, was that of utter and ineffable despair.

Lady Westborough was as lively, as bland, and as

agreeable as ever; but Clarence thought he detected something restrained and embarrassed lurking beneath all the graces of her exterior manner; and the single glance he had caught of the pale and altered face of Lady Flora was not calculated to reassure his mind or animate his spirits. His visit was short; when he left the room, he lingered for a few moments in the ante-chamber, in the hope of again seeing Lady Flora. While thus loitering, his ear caught the sound of Lady Westborough's voice: "When Mr. Linden calls again, you have my orders never to admit him into this room; he will be shown into the drawing-room."

With a hasty step and a burning cheek Clarence quitted the house, and hurried, first to his solitary apartments, and thence, impatient of loneliness, to the peaceful retreat of his benefactor.

CHAPTER XXXVI.

A maiden's thoughts do check my trembling hand. — DRAYTON.

THERE is something very delightful in turning from the unquietness and agitation, the fever, the ambition, the harsh and worldly realities of man's character, to the gentle and deep recesses of woman's more secret heart. Within her musings is a realm of haunted and fairy thought, to which the things of this turbid and troubled life have no entrance. What to her are the changes of state, the rivalries and contentions which form the staple of *our* existence? For her there is an intense and fond philosophy, before whose eye substances flit and fade like shadows, and shadows grow glowingly into truth. Her soul's creations are not as the moving and mortal images seen in the common day: they are things, like spirits steeped in the dim moonlight, heard when all else are still, and busy when earth's laborers are at rest. They are

Such stuff
As dreams are made of, and their little life
Is rounded by a sleep.

Hers is the real and uncentred *poetry of being*, which pervades and surrounds her as with an air, which peoples her visions and animates her love, which shrinks from earth into itself, and finds marvel and meditation in all that it beholds within, and which spreads even over the heaven in whose faith she so ardently believes, the mystery and the tenderness of romance.

LETTER I.

FROM LADY FLORA ARDENNE TO MISS ELEANOR TREVANION.

You say that I have not written to you so punctually of late as I used to do before I came to London, and you impute my negligence to the gayeties and pleasures by which I am surrounded. *Eh bien !* my dear Eleanor, could you have thought of a better excuse for me ? You know how fond *we* — ay, dearest, you as well as I — used to be of dancing, and how earnestly we were wont to anticipate those children's balls at my uncle's, which were the only ones we were ever permitted to attend. I found a stick the other day on which I had cut seven notches, significant of seven days more to the next ball, — we reckoned time by balls then, and danced chronologically. Well, my dear Eleanor, here I am now, brought out, tolerably well-behaved, only not dignified enough, according to mamma, — as fond of laughing, talking, and dancing as ever; and yet, do you know, a ball, though still very delightful, is far from being the most important event in creation; its anticipation does not keep me awake of a night; and, what is more to the purpose, its recollection does not make me lock up my writing-desk, burn my *portefeuille*, and forget you, all of which you seem to imagine it has been able to effect.

No, dearest Eleanor, you are mistaken; for were she twice as giddy, and ten times as volatile as she is, your own Flora could never, never forget you, nor the happy hours we have spent together, nor the pretty goldfinches we had in common, nor the little Scotch duets we used to sing together, nor our longings to change them into Italian, nor our disappointment when we did so, nor our laughter at Signior Shrikalini, nor our tears when poor, darling Bijou died. And do you remember, dearest, the charming green lawn where we used to play together, and plan tricks for your governess ? She was very, very cross; though, I think, we were a little to blame too. However, I was much the worst ! And pray, Eleanor, don't you remember how we used to like being called pretty, and told of the conquests we should make ! Do you like all that

now ? For my part, I am tired of it, — at least from the generality of one's flatterers.

Ah ! Eleanor, or "heigho ! " as the young ladies in novels write, do you remember how jealous I was of you at —, and how spiteful I was, and how you were an angel, and bore with me, and kissed me, and told me that — that I had nothing to fear ! Well, Clar—, I mean Mr. Linden, is now in town, and so popular, and so admired ! I wish we were at — again, for there we saw him every day, and now we don't meet more than three times a week ; and though I like hearing him praised above all things, yet I feel very uncomfortable when that praise comes from very, very pretty women. I wish we were at — again ! Mamma, who is looking more beautiful than ever, is very kind ! She says nothing, to be sure, but she must see how — that is to say — she must know that — that I — I mean that Clarence is very attentive to me, and that I blush and look exceedingly silly whenever he is ; and, therefore, I suppose that whenever Clarence thinks fit to ask me, I shall not be under the necessity of getting up at six o'clock, and travelling to Gretna Green, through that odious North Road, up the Highgate Hill, and over Finchley Common.

"But when will he ask you ?" My dearest Eleanor, that is more than I can say. To tell you the truth, there is something about Linden which I cannot thoroughly understand. They say he is nephew and heir to the Mr. Talbot whom you may have heard papa talk of ; but if so, why the hints, the insinuations, of not being what he seems, which Clarence perpetually throws out, and which only excite my interest without gratifying my curiosity ? "It is not," he has said, more than once, "as an obscure adventurer that I will claim your love : " and if I venture, which is very seldom (for I am a little afraid of him), to question his meaning, he either sinks into utter silence, for which, if I had loved *according to book*, and not so naturally, I should be very angry with him, or twist his words into another signification, such as that he would not claim me till he had become something higher and nobler than he is now. Alas, my dear Eleanor, it takes a long time to make an ambassador out of an *attaché*.

See now if you reproached me justly with scanty correspondences. If I write a line more, I must begin a new sheet, and that will be beyond the power of a frank, — a thing which would, I know, break the heart of your dear, good, generous, but a little too prudent aunt, and irrevocably ruin me in her esteem. So God bless you, dearest Eleanor, and believe me most affectionately yours,

FLORA ARDENNE.

LETTER II.

FROM THE SAME TO THE SAME.

PRAY, dearest Eleanor, does that good aunt of yours — now, don't frown, I am not going to speak disrespectfully of her — ever take a liking to young gentlemen whom you detest, and insist upon the fallacy of your opinion, and the unerring rectitude of hers? If so, you can pity and comprehend my grief. Mamma has formed quite an attachment to a very disagreeable person! He is Lord Borodaile, the eldest, and, I believe, the only son of Lord Ulswater. Perhaps you may have met him abroad, for he has been a great traveller; his family is among the most ancient in England, and his father's estate covers half a county. All this mamma tells me, with the most earnest air in the world, whenever I declaim upon his impertinence or *disagreeability* (is there such a word? there ought to be). "Well," said I to-day, "what's that to me?" "It may be a great deal to you," replied mamma, significantly, and the blood rushed from my face to my heart. She could not, Eleanor, she could not mean, after all her kindness to Clarence, and in spite of all her penetration into my heart, — oh, no, no; she could not. How terribly suspicious this love makes one!

But if I disliked Lord Borodaile at first, I have hated him of late; for, somehow or other, he is always in the way. If I see Clarence hastening through the crowd to ask me to dance, at that very instant up steps Lord Borodaile with his cold, changeless face, and his haughty, old-fashioned bow, and his abominable dark complexion; and mamma smiles; and he hopes he finds me disengaged; and I am hurried off, — and

VOL. I. — 16

poor Clarence looks so disappointed and so wretched ! You have no idea how ill-tempered this makes me. I could not help asking Lord Borodaile, yesterday, if he was *never* going abroad again ; and the hateful creature played with his cravat, and answered "Never!" I was in hopes that my sullenness would drive his lordship away ; *tout au contraire*, "Nothing," said he to me the other day, when he was in full pout, — "nothing is so plebeian as good-humor !"

I wish then, Eleanor, that he could see your governess ; she must be majesty itself in his eyes !

Ah, dearest, how we belie ourselves. At this moment, when you might think, from the idle, rattling, silly flow of my letter, that my heart was as light and free as it was when we used to play on the green lawn, and under the sunny trees, in the merry days of our childhood, the tears are running down my cheeks ; see where they have fallen on the page, and my head throbs as if my thoughts were too full and heavy for it to contain. It is past one ! I am alone, and in my own room. Mamma is gone to a rout at H—— House ; but I knew I should not meet Clarence there, and so I said I was ill, and remained at home. I have done so often of late, whenever I have learned from *him* that he was not going to the same place as mamma. Indeed, I love much better to sit alone and think over his words and looks ; and I have drawn, after repeated attempts, a profile likeness of him ; and oh, Eleanor, I cannot tell you how dear it is to me ; and yet there is not a line, not a look of his countenance which I have not learned by heart, without such useless aids to my memory. But I am ashamed of telling you all this, and my eyes ache so, that I can write no more.

Ever, as ever, dearest Eleanor, your affectionate friend.

LETTER III.

FROM THE SAME TO THE SAME.

ELEANOR, I am undone ! My mother — my mother has been so cruel ; but she cannot, she cannot intend it, or she knows very little of my heart. With some, ties may be as easily

broken as formed ; with others they are twined around life itself.

Clarence dined with us yesterday, and was unusually animated and agreeable. He was engaged on business with Lord Aspeden afterwards, and left us early. We had a few people in the evening, Lord Borodaile among the rest ; and my mother spoke of Clarence, and his relationship to, and expectations from, Mr. Talbot. Lord Borodaile sneered ; " You are mistaken," said he, sarcastically ; " Mr. Linden may feel it convenient to give out that he is related to so old a family as the Talbots ; and since Heaven only knows who or what he is, he may as well claim alliance with one person as another ; but he is certainly not the nephew of Mr. Talbot of Scarsdale Park, for that gentleman had no sisters, and but one brother, who left an only daughter ; that daughter had also but one child, certainly no relation to Mr. Linden. I can vouch for the truth of this statement ; for the Talbots are related to, or are at least nearly connected with myself ; and I thank Heaven that I have a pedigree, even in its collateral branches, worth learning by heart." And then Lord Borodaile — I little thought, when I railed against him, what serious cause I should have to hate him — turned to me, and harassed me with his tedious attentions the whole of the evening.

This morning mamma sent for me into her boudoir. " I have observed," said she, with the greatest indifference, " that Mr. Linden has, *of late*, been much too particular in his manner towards you, — your foolish and undue familiarity with every one has perhaps given him encouragement. After the gross imposition which Lord Borodaile exposed to us last night, I cannot but consider the young man as a mere adventurer, and must not only insist on your putting a total termination to civilities, which we must henceforth consider presumption, but I myself shall consider it incumbent upon me greatly to limit the advances he has thought proper to make towards my acquaintance."

You may guess how thunderstruck I was by this speech. I could not answer ; my tongue literally clove to my mouth, and I was only relieved by a sudden and violent burst of tears.

Mamma looked exceedingly displeased, and was just going to speak, when the servant threw open the door and announced Mr. Linden. I rose hastily, and had only just time to escape as he entered ; but when I heard that dear, dear voice, I could not resist turning for one moment. He saw me, and was struck mute ; for the agony of my soul was stamped visibly on my countenance. That moment was over, — with a violent effort I tore myself away.

Eleanor, I can now write no more. God bless you! and *me* too, — for I am very, very unhappy.

F. A.

CHAPTER XXXVII.

What a charming character is a kind old man.

STEPHEN MONTAGUE.

"CHEER up, my dear boy," said Talbot, kindly, "we must never despair. What though Lady Westborough has forbidden you the *boudoir*; a *boudoir* is a very different thing from a daughter, and you have no right to suppose that the veto extends to both. But now that we are on this subject, do let me reason with you seriously. Have you not already tasted all the pleasures, and been sufficiently annoyed by some of the pains, of acting the 'Incognito'? Be ruled by me: resume your proper name; it is at least one which the proudest might acknowledge; and its discovery will remove the greatest obstacle to the success which you so ardently desire."

Clarence, who was laboring under strong excitement, paused for some moments, as if to collect himself, before he replied: "I have been thrust from my father's home, I have been made the victim of another's crime, I have been denied the rights and name of son; perhaps (and I say this bitterly) justly denied them, despite of my own innocence. What would you have me do? Resume a name never conceded to me, — perhaps not righteously mine; thrust myself upon the unwilling and shrinking hands which disowned and rejected me; blazon my virtues by pretensions which I myself have promised to forego, and foist myself on the notice of strangers by the very claims which my nearest relations

dispute? Never, never, never! With the simple name I have assumed, the friend I myself have won, — you, my generous benefactor, my real father, who never forsook nor insulted me for my misfortunes, — with these, I have gained some steps in the ladder; with these, and those gifts of nature, a stout heart, and a willing hand, of which none can rob me, I will either ascend the rest, even to the summit, or fall to the dust, unknown, but not contemned; unlamented, but not despised."

"Well, well," said Talbot, brushing away a tear which he could not deny to the feeling, even while he disputed the judgment of the young adventurer, — "well, this is all very fine and very foolish; but you shall never want friend or father while I live, or when I have ceased to live; but come, — sit down, share my dinner, which is not very good, and my dessert, which is. Help me to entertain two or three guests who are coming to me in the evening, to talk on literature, sup, and sleep; and to-morrow you shall return home, and see Lady Flora in the drawing-room, if you cannot in the *boudoir*."

And Clarence was easily persuaded to accept the invitation.

Talbot was not one of those men who are forced to exert themselves to be entertaining. He had the pleasant and easy way of imparting his great general and curious information, that a man, partly humorist, partly philosopher, who values himself on being a man of letters, and is in spite of himself a man of the world, always ought to possess. Clarence was soon beguiled from the remembrance of his mortifications, and, by little and little, entirely yielded to the airy and happy flow of Talbot's conversation.

In the evening, three or four men of literary eminence

(as many as Talbot's small Tusculum would accommodate with beds) arrived, and in a conversation, free alike from the jargon of pedants and the insipidities of fashion, the night fled away swiftly and happily even to the lover.

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

We are here (in the country) among the vast and noble scenes of nature ; we are there (in the town) among the pitiful shifts of policy. We walk here in the light and open ways of the divine bounty ; we grope there in the dark and confused labyrinths of human malice ; our senses are here feasted with all the clear and genuine taste of their objects, which are all sophisticated there, and for the most part overwhelmed with their contraries. Here pleasure, methinks, looks like a beautiful, constant, and modest wife ; it is there an impudent, fickle, and painted harlot.

COWLEY.

DRAW up the curtain ! The scene is the opera.

The pit is crowded ; the connoisseurs in the front row are in a very ill humor. It must be confessed, that extreme heat is a little trying to the temper of a critic.

The opera then was not what it is now, nor even what it had been in a former time. It is somewhat amusing to find Goldsmith questioning, in one of his Essays, whether the opera could ever become popular in England. But on the night on which the reader is summoned to that "theatre of sweet sounds," a celebrated singer from the Continent made his first appearance in London, and all the world thronged to "that odious opera-house," to hear or to say they had heard the famous Sopranietto.

With a nervous step, Clarence proceeded to Lady Westborough's box ; and it was many minutes that he lingered by the door before he summoned courage to obtain admission.

He entered : the box was crowded ; but Lady Flora was not there. Lord Borodaile was sitting next to Lady

Westborough. As Clarence entered Lord Borodaile raised his eyebrows, and Lady Westborough her glass. However disposed a great person may be to drop a lesser one, no one of real birth or breeding ever cuts another. Lady Westborough, therefore, though much colder, was no less civil than usual; and Lord Borodaile bowed lower than ever to *Mr.* Linden, as he punctiliously called him. But Clarence's quick eye discovered instantly that he was no welcome intruder, and that his day with the beautiful marchioness was over. His visit, consequently, was short and embarrassed. When he left the box he heard Lord Borodaile's short, slow, sneering laugh, followed by Lady Westborough's "hush" of reproof.

His blood boiled. He hurried along the passage with his eyes fixed upon the ground and his hand clenched.

"What ho! Linden, my good fellow; why, you look as if all the ferocity of the great Figg were in your veins," cried a good-humored voice. Clarence started, and saw the young and high-spirited Duke of Haverfield.

"Are you going behind the scenes?" said his grace. "I have just come thence; and you had much better drop into La Meronville's box with me. You sup with her to-night, do you not?"

"No, indeed!" replied Clarence; "I scarcely know her, except by sight."

"Well, and what think you of her?"

"That she is the prettiest Frenchwoman I ever saw."

"Commend me to secret sympathies!" cried the duke. "She has asked me three times who you were, and told me three times that you were the handsomest man in London, and had quite a foreign air; the latter recommendation being of course far greater than the former."

So, after this, you cannot refuse to accompany me to her box, and make her acquaintance."

"Nay," answered Clarence, "I shall be too happy to profit by the taste of so discerning a person; but it is cruel in you, Duke, not to feign a little jealousy, — a little reluctance to introduce so formidable a rival."

"Oh, as to me," said the duke, "I only like her for her mental, not her personal attractions. She is very agreeable, and a little witty; sufficient attractions for one in her situation."

"But do tell me a little of her history," said Clarence; "for, in spite of her renown, I only know her as La Belle Meronville. Is she not living *en ami* with some one of our acquaintance?"

"To be sure," replied the duke, "with Lord Borodaile. She is prodigiously extravagant; and Borodaile affects to be prodigiously fond; but as there is only a certain fund of affection in the human heart, and all Lord Borodaile's is centred *in* Lord Borodaile, that cannot really be the case."

"Is he jealous of her?" said Clarence.

"Not in the least, nor indeed does she give him any cause. She is very gay, very talkative, gives excellent suppers, and always has her box at the opera crowded with admirers; but that is all. She encourages many, and favors but one. Happy Borodaile! My lot is less fortunate! You know, I suppose, that Julia has deserted me?"

"You astonish me, — and for what?"

"Oh, she told me, with a vehement burst of tears, that she was convinced I did not love her, and that a hundred pounds a month was not sufficient to maintain a milliner's apprentice. I answered the first assertion by an assurance that I adored her; but I preserved a

total silence with regard to the latter; and so I found Trevanion *tête-à-tête* with her the next day."

"What did you?" said Clarence.

"Sent my valet to Trevanion with an old coat of mine, my compliments, and my hopes that, as Mr. Trevanion was so fond of my cast-off conveniences, he would honor me by accepting the accompanying trifle."

"He challenged you, without doubt?"

"Challenged me! No; he tells all his friends that I am the wittiest man in Europe."

"A fool can speak the truth, you see," said Clarence, laughing.

"Thank you, Linden; you shall have my good word with La Meronville for that; *mais allons*."

Mademoiselle *de la Meronville*, as she pointedly entitled herself, was one of those charming adventuresses who, making the most of a good education and a prepossessing person, a delicate turn for letter-writing, and a lively vein of conversation, come to England for a year or two, as Spaniards were wont to go to Mexico, and who return to their native country with a profound contempt for the barbarians whom they have so egregiously despoiled. Mademoiselle *de la Meronville* was small, beautifully formed, had the prettiest hands and feet in the world, and laughed *musically*. By the by, how difficult it is to laugh, or even to smile, at once naturally and gracefully. It is one of Steele's finest touches of character where he says of Will Honeycomb, "He can smile when one speaks to him, and laughs easily."

In a word, the pretty Frenchwoman was precisely formed to turn the head of a man like Lord Borodaile, who loved to be courted, and who required to be amused. "Mademoiselle *de la Meronville* received Clar-

ence with a great deal of grace, and a little reserve, the first chiefly natural, the last wholly artificial.

"Well," said the duke (in French), "you have not told me who are to be of your party this evening, — Borodaile, I suppose, of course?"

"No, he cannot come to-night."

"Ah, *quel malheur!* then the hock will not be iced enough, — Borodaile's looks are the best wine-coolers in the world."

"Fie!" cried La Meronville, glancing towards Clarence: "I cannot endure your malevolence; wit makes you very bitter."

"And that is exactly the reason why *La Belle Meronville* loves me so. Nothing is so sweet to one person as bitterness upon another; it is human nature and French nature (which is a very different thing) into the bargain."

"Bah! my lord duke, you judge of others by yourself."

"To be sure I do," cried the duke; "and that is the best way of forming a right judgment. Ah! what a foot that little *figurante* has, — you don't admire her, Linden?"

"No, Duke; my admiration is like the bird in the cage, — chained here, and cannot fly away!" answered Clarence, with a smile at the frippery of his compliment.

"Ah, Monsieur," cried the pretty Frenchwoman, leaning back, "you have been at Paris, I see, — one does not learn those graces of language in England. I have been five months in your country, — brought over the prettiest dresses imaginable, and have only received three compliments, and (pity me!) two out of the three were upon my pronunciation of 'How do you do?'"

"Well," said Clarence, "I should have imagined that in England, above all other countries, your vanity would have been gratified; for you know we pique ourselves on our sincerity, and say all we think."

"Yes! then you always think very unpleasantly; what an alternative! which is the best, to speak ill, or to think ill of one?"

"*Pour l'amour de Dieu*," cried the duke, "don't ask such puzzling questions; you are always getting into those moral subtleties, which I suppose you learn from Borodaile. He is a wonderful metaphysician, I hear, — I can answer for his chemical powers; the moment he enters a room the very walls grow damp; as for me, I dissolve; I should flow into a fountain, like Arethusa, if happily his lordship did not freeze one again into substance as fast as he dampens one into thaw."

"*Fi donc!*" cried La Meronville. "I should be very angry, had you not taught me to be very indifferent —"

"To *him!*" said the duke, dryly. "I'm glad to hear it. He is not worth *une grande passion*, believe me, — but tell me, *ma belle*, who else sups with you?"

"*D'abord*, Monsieur Linden, I trust," answered La Meronville, with a look of invitation to which Clarence bowed and smiled his assent, "Milord D——, and Mons. Trevanion, Mademoiselle Caumartin, and Le Prince Pietro del Ordino."

"Nothing can be better arranged," said the duke. "But see, they are just going to drop the curtain. Let me call your carriage."

"You are too good, Milord," replied La Meronville, with a bow, which said, "Of course;" and the duke, who would not have stirred three paces for the first princess of the blood, hurried out of the box (despite of

Clarence's offer to undertake the commission) to inquire after the carriage of the most notorious adventuress of the day.

Clarence was alone in the box with the beautiful Frenchwoman. To say truth, Linden was far too much in love with Lady Flora, and too occupied, as to his other thoughts, with the projects of ambition, to be easily led into any disreputable or criminal *liaison*; he therefore conversed with his usual ease, though with rather more than his usual gallantry, without feeling the least touched by the charms of La Meronville, or the least desirous of supplanting Lord Borodaile in her favor.

The duke reappeared, and announced the carriage. As, with La Meronville leaning on his arm, Clarence hurried out, he accidentally looked up, and saw on the head of the stairs Lady Westborough with her party (Lord Borodaile among the rest) in waiting for her carriage. For almost the first time in his life, Clarence felt ashamed of himself; his cheek burned like fire, and he involuntarily let go the fair hand which was leaning upon his arm. However, the weaker our cause the better face we should put upon it, and Clarence, recovering his presence of mind, and vainly hoping he had not been perceived, buried his face as well as he was able in the fur collar of his cloak, and hurried on.

"You saw Lord Borodaile?" said the duke to La Meronville, as he handed her into her carriage.

"Yes, I accidentally looked back after we had passed him, and then I saw him."

"Looked back!" said the duke; "I wonder he did not turn you into a pillar of salt."

"*Fi donc!*" cried La Belle Meronville, tapping his grace playfully on the arm, in order to do which she

was forced to lean a little harder upon Clarence's, which she had not yet relinquished, — "*fi donc ! — François, chez moi !*"

"My carriage is just behind," said the duke. "You will go with me to La Meronville's, of course."

"Really, my dear duke," said Clarence, "I wish I could excuse myself from this party. I have another engagement."

"Excuse yourself? — and leave me to the mercy of Mademoiselle Caumartin, who has the face of an ostrich, and talks me out of breath! Never, my dear Linden, never! Besides, I want you to see how well I shall behave to Trevanion. Here is the carriage. *Entrez, mon cher.*"

And Clarence, weakly and foolishly (but he *was* very young and very unhappy, and so longing for an escape from his own thoughts), entered the carriage, and drove to the supper party, in order to prevent the Duke of Haverfield being talked out of breath by Mademoiselle Caumartin, who had the face of an ostrich.

CHAPTER XXXIX.

Yet truth is keenly sought for, and the wind,
Charged with rich words, poured out in thought's defence,
Whether the church inspire that eloquence,
Or a Platonic piety, confined
To the sole temple of the inward mind ;
And one there is who builds immortal lays,
Though doomed to tread in solitary ways ;
Darkness before, and danger's voice behind !
Yet not alone.

WORDSWORTH.

LONDON, — thou Niobe, who sittest in stone, amidst thy stricken and fated children ; nurse of the desolate, that hidest in thy bosom the shame, the sorrows, the sins of many sons ; in whose arms the fallen and the outcast shroud their distresses, and shelter from the proud man's contumely ; epitome and focus of the disparities and maddening contrasts of this wrong world, that assemblest together in one great heap the woes, the joys, the elevations, the debasements of the various tribes of man ; mightiest of levellers, confounding in thy whirlpool all ranks, all minds, the graven labors of knowledge, the straws of the maniac, purple and rags, the regalities and the loathsomeness of earth, — palace and lazar-house combined ! Grave of the living, where, mingled and massed together, we couch, but rest not ; “ for in that sleep of life what dreams *do* come,” each vexed with a separate vision, — “ shadows ” which “ grieve the heart,” unreal in their substance, but faithful in their warnings, flitting from the eye, but gravings unflinching memories

on the mind, which reproduce new dreams over and over, until the phantasm ceases, and the pall of a heavier torpor falls upon the brain, and all is still and dark and hushed! — “From the stir of thy great Babel,” and the fixed tinsel glare in which sits Pleasure like a star, “which shines, but warms not with its powerless rays,” we turn to thy deeper and more secret haunts. Thy wilderness is all before us, — where to choose our place of rest; and, to our eyes, thy hidden recesses are revealed.

The clock of St. Paul’s had tolled the second hour of morning. Within a small and humble apartment, in the very heart of the city, there sat a writer, whose lucubrations, then obscure and unknown, were destined, years afterwards, to excite the vague admiration of the crowd, and the deeper homage of the wise. They were of that nature which is slow in winning its way to popular esteem, — the result of the hived and hoarded knowledge of years, the produce of deep thought and sublime aspirations, influencing in its bearings the interests of the many, yet only capable of analysis by the judgment of the few. But the stream broke forth at last from the cavern to the daylight, although *the source* was never traced; or, to change the image, — albeit none know the hand which executed, and the head which designed, — the monument of a mighty intellect has been at length dug up, as it were, from the envious earth, the brighter for its past obscurity, and the more certain of immortality from the temporary neglect it has sustained.

The room was, as we before said, very small and meanly furnished; yet were there a few articles of costliness and luxury scattered about, which told that the tastes of its owner had not been quite humbled to the

level of his fortunes. One side of the narrow chamber was covered with shelves, which supported books in various languages; and though chiefly on scientific subjects, not utterly confined to them. Among the doctrines of the philosopher, and the golden rules of the moralist, were also seen the pleasant dreams of poets, the legends of Spenser, the refining moralities of Pope, the lofty errors of Lucretius, and the sublime relics of *our* "dead kings of melody."¹ And over the hearth was a picture, taken in more prosperous days, of one who had been, and was yet, to the tenant of that abode, better than fretted roofs and glittering banquets, the objects of ambition, or even the immortality of fame. It was the face of one very young and beautiful, and the deep, tender eyes looked down, as with a watchful fondness, upon the lucubator and his labors. While beneath the window, which was left unclosed, for it was scarcely June, were simple yet not inelegant vases filled with flowers:

"These lovely leaves, where we
May read how soon things have
Their end, though ne'er so brave."²

The writer was alone, and had just paused from his employment; he was leaning his face upon one hand, in a thoughtful and earnest mood, and the air, which came chill but gentle from the window, slightly stirred the locks from the broad and marked brow, over which they fell in thin but graceful waves. Partly owing, perhaps, to the waning light of the single lamp and the lateness of the hour, his cheek seemed very pale, and the complete, though contemplative rest of the features partook greatly of the quiet of habitual sadness, and a little of

¹ Shakespeare and Milton.

² Herrick.

the languor of shaken health; yet the expression, despite the proud cast of the brow and profile, was rather benevolent than stern or dark in its pensiveness, and the lines spoke more of the wear and harrow of deep thought, than the inroads of ill-regulated passion.

There was a slight tap at the door,—the latch was raised, and the original of the picture I have described entered the apartment.

Time had not been idle with her since that portrait had been taken: the round elastic figure had lost much of its youth and freshness; the step, though light, was languid, and in the centre of the fair smooth cheek, which was a little sunken, burned one deep, bright spot,—fatal sign to those who have watched the progress of the most deadly and deceitful of our national maladies; yet still the form and countenance were eminently interesting and lovely; and though the bloom was gone forever, the beauty, which not even death could wholly have despoiled, remained to triumph over debility, misfortune, and disease.

She approached the student, and laid her hand upon his shoulder,—

“Dearest!” said he, tenderly yet reproachfully, “yet up, and the hour so late, and yourself so weak? Fie, I must learn to scold you.”

“And how,” answered the intruder, “how could I sleep or rest while you are consuming your very life in those thankless labors?”

“By which,” interrupted the writer, with a faint smile, “we glean our scanty subsistence.”

“Yes,” said the wife (for she held that relation to the student), and the tears stood in her eyes; “I know well that every morsel of bread, every drop of water, is wrung from your very heart’s blood, and I—I am the cause of

all; but surely you exert yourself too much, more than can be requisite. These night damps, this sickly and chilling air, heavy with the rank vapors of the coming morning, are not suited to thoughts and toils which are alone sufficient to sear your mind and exhaust your strength. Come, my own love, to bed; and yet, first, come and look upon our child, — how sound she sleeps! I have leaned over her for the last hour, and tried to fancy it was you whom I watched; for she has learned already your smile, and has it even when she sleeps.”

“She has cause to smile,” said the husband, bitterly.

“She has, *for she is yours!* and even in poverty and humble hopes, that is an inheritance which may well teach her pride and joy. Come, love, the air is keen, and the damp rises to your forehead, — yet stay, till I have kissed it away.”

“Mine own love,” said the student, as he rose and wound his arm round the slender waist of his wife, “wrap your shawl closer over your bosom, and let us look for one instant upon the night. I cannot sleep till I have slaked the fever of my blood; the air has nothing of coldness in its breath to me.”

And they walked to the window, and looked forth. All was hushed and still in the narrow street; the cold gray clouds were hurrying fast along the sky, and the stars, weak and waning in their light, gleamed forth at rare intervals upon the mute city, like the expiring watch-lamps of the dead.

They leaned out, and spoke not; but when they looked above upon the melancholy heavens, they drew nearer to each other, as if it were their natural instinct to do so, whenever the world without seemed discouraging and sad.

At length the student broke the silence; but his

thoughts, which were wandering and disjointed, were breathed less to her than vaguely and unconsciously to himself: "Morn breaks, — another and another! — day upon day! — while we drag on our load like the blind beast which knows not when the burden shall be cast off, and the hour of rest be come."

The woman pressed his hand to her bosom, but made no rejoinder, — she knew his mood, — and the student continued.

"And so life frets itself away! Four years have passed over our seclusion, — four years! — a great segment in the little circle of our mortality; and of those years, what day has pleasure won from labor, or what night has sleep snatched wholly from the lamp? Weaker than the miser, the insatiable and restless mind traverses from east to west; and from the nooks and corners and crevices of earth collects, fragment by fragment, grain by grain, atom by atom, the riches which it gathers to its coffers, — for what? — to starve amidst the plenty! The fantasies of the imagination bring a ready and substantial return, — not so the treasures of thought. Better that I had renounced the soul's labor for that of its hardier frame; better that I had 'sweated in the eye of Phœbus,' than 'eat my heart with crosses and with cares,' — seeking truth and wanting bread; adding to the indigence of poverty its humiliation; wroth with the arrogance of men, who weigh in the shallow scales of their meagre knowledge the product of lavish thought, and of the hard hours for which health and sleep and spirit have been exchanged; sharing the lot of those who would enchant the old serpent of evil, which refuses the voice of the charmer! — struggling against the prejudice and bigoted delusion of the bandaged and fettered herd to whom, in our fond hopes and aspirations, we trusted

to give light and freedom; seeing the slavish judgments we would have redeemed from error clashing their chains at us in ire; made criminal by our very benevolence: the martyrs whose zeal is rewarded with persecution, whose prophecies are crowned with contempt! Better, oh, better that I had not listened to the vanity of a heated brain, — better that I had made my home with the lark and the wild bee, among the fields and the quiet hills, where life, if obscurer, is less debased, and hope, if less eagerly indulged, is less bitterly disappointed. The frame, it is true, might have been bowed to a harsher labor; but the heart would at least have had its rest from anxiety, and the mind its relaxation from thought."

The wife's tears fell upon the hand she clasped. The student turned, and his heart smote him for the selfishness of his complaints. He drew her closer and closer to his bosom; and gazing fondly upon those eyes which years of indigence and care might have robbed of their young lustre, but not of their undying tenderness, he kissed away her tears and addressed her in a voice which never failed to charm her grief into forgetfulness.

"Dearest and kindest," he said, "was I not to blame for accusing those privations or regrets which have only made us love each other the more! Trust me, mine own treasure, that it is only in the peevishness of an inconstant and fretful humor, that I have murmured against my fortune. For, in the midst of all, I look upon you, my angel, my comforter, my young dream of love, which God, in his mercy, breathed into waking life, — I look upon you, and am blessed and grateful. Nor in my juster moments do I accuse even the nature of these studies, though they bring us so scanty a reward. Have I not hours of secret and overflowing delight, the triumphs of

gratified research, — flashes of sudden light, which reward the darkness of thought, and light up my solitude as a revel? These feelings of rapture, which nought but science can afford, amply repay her disciples for worse evils and severer hardships than it has been my destiny to endure. Look along the sky, — how the vapors struggle with the still yet feeble stars: even so have the mists of error been pierced, though not scattered by the dim but holy lights of past wisdom; and now the morning is at hand, and in that hope we journey on, doubtful, but not utterly in darkness. Nor is this *all my* hope; there *is* a loftier and more steady comfort than that which mere philosophy can bestow. If the certainty of future fame bore Milton rejoicing through his blindness, or cheered Galileo in his dungeon, what stronger and holier support shall not be given to *him* who has loved mankind as his brothers, and devoted his labors to their cause? — who has not sought, but relinquished, his own renown? — who has braved the present censures of men for their future benefit, and trampled upon glory in the energy of benevolence? Will there not be for him something more powerful than fame to comfort his sufferings and to sustain his hopes? If the wish of mere posthumous honor be a feeling rather vain than exalted, the love of our race affords us a more rational and noble desire of remembrance. Come what will, that love, if it animates our toils, and directs our studies, shall, when we are dust, make our relics of value, our efforts of avail, and consecrate the desire of fame, which were else a passion selfish and impure, by connecting it with the welfare of ages, and the eternal interests of the world and its Creator! Come, we will to bed."

CHAPTER XL.

A man may be formed by nature for an admirable citizen, and yet, from the purest motives, be a dangerous one to the State in which the accident of birth has placed him. — STEPHEN MONTAGUE.

THE night again closed, and the student once more resumed his labors. The spirit of his hope and comforter of his toils sat by him, ever and anon lifting her fond eyes from her work to gaze upon his countenance, to sigh, and to return sadly and quietly to her employment.

A heavy step ascended the stairs, the door opened, and the tall figure of Wolfe, the republican, presented itself. The female rose, pushed a chair towards him with a smile and grace suited to better fortunes, and, retiring from the table, resealed herself silent and apart.

"It is a fine night," said the student, when the mutual greetings were over. "Whence come you?"

"From contemplating human misery and worse than human degradation," replied Wolfe, slowly seating himself.

"Those words specify no place, — they apply universally," said the student, with a sigh.

"Ay, Glendower, for misgovernment is universal," rejoined Wolfe.

Glendower made no answer.

"Oh!" said Wolfe, in the low, suppressed tone of intense passion which was customary to him, "it mad-

dens me to look upon the willingness with which men hug their trappings of slavery, — bears, proud of the rags which deck, and the monkeys which ride them. But it frets me yet more when some lordling sweeps along, lifting his dull eyes above the fools whose only crime and debasement are — what? — their subjection to *him*! Such an one I encountered a few nights since; and he will remember the meeting longer than I shall. I taught that ‘god to tremble.’”

The female rose, glanced towards her husband, and silently withdrew.

Wolfe paused for a few moments, looked curiously and pryingly round, and then rising, went forth into the passage to see that no loiterer or listener was near, — returned, and drawing his chair close to Glendower, fixed his dark eye upon him, and said, —

“You are poor, and your spirit rises against your lot; you are just, and your heart swells against the general oppression you behold: can you not dare to remedy your ills and those of mankind?”

“I can dare,” said Glendower, calmly, though haughtily, “all things but crime.”

“And which is crime? — the rising against, or the submission to evil government? Which is crime, I ask you?”

“That which is the most imprudent,” answered Glendower. “We may sport in ordinary cases with our own safeties, but only in rare cases with the safety of others.”

Wolfe rose, and paced the narrow room impatiently to and fro. He paused by the window, and threw it open. “Come here,” he cried, — “come, and look out.”

Glendower did so, — all was still and quiet.

“Why did you call me?” said he; “I see nothing.”

"Nothing!" exclaimed Wolfe; "look again, — look on yon sordid and squalid huts; look at yon court, that from this wretched street leads to abodes to which these are as palaces; look at yon victims of vice and famine, plying beneath the midnight skies their filthy and infectious trade. Wherever you turn your eyes, what see you? — misery, loathsomeness, sin. Are you a man, and call you these nothing! And now lean forth still more, — see afar off, by yonder lamp, the mansion of ill-gotten and griping wealth. He who owns those buildings, what did he that he should riot while we starve? He wrung from the negro's tears and bloody sweat the luxuries of a pampered and vitiated taste; he pandered to the excesses of the rich; he heaped their tables with the product of a nation's groans. Lo! his reward! He is rich, prosperous, honored! He sits in the legislative assembly; he declaims against immorality; he contends for the safety of property, and the equilibrium of ranks. Transport yourself from this spot for an instant, — imagine that you survey the gorgeous homes of aristocracy and power, — the palaces of the west. What see you there? — the few sucking, draining, exhausting the blood, the treasure, the very existence of the many. Are we, who are *of* the many, wise to suffer it?"

"Are we of the many?" said Glendower.

"We could be," said Wolfe, hastily.

"I doubt it," replied Glendower.

"Listen," said the republican, laying his hand upon Glendower's shoulder, — "listen to me. There are in this country men whose spirits not years of delayed hope, wearisome persecution, and, bitterer than all, misrepresentation from some and contempt from others, have yet quelled and tamed. We watch our opportunity; the growing distress of the country, the increasing severity

and misrule of the administration, will soon afford it us. Your talents, your benevolence, render you worthy to join us. Do so, and —”

“Hush!” interrupted the student; “you know not what you say: you weigh not the folly, the madness of your design! I am a man more fallen, more sunken, more disappointed than you. I, too, have had at my heart the burning and lonely hope which, through years of misfortune and want, has comforted me with the thought of serving and enlightening mankind, — I, too, have devoted to the fulfilment of that hope days and nights in which the brain grew dizzy and the heart heavy and clogged with the intensity of my pursuits. Were the dungeon and the scaffold my reward, Heaven knows that I would not flinch eye or hand, or abate a jot of heart and hope in the thankless prosecution of my toils. Know me, then, as one of fortunes more desperate than your own; of an ambition more unquenchable; of a philanthropy no less ardent; and, I *will* add, of a courage no less firm, — and behold the utter hopelessness of your projects with others, when to me they only appear the visions of an enthusiast.”

Wolfe sank down in the chair.

“Is it even so?” said he, slowly and musingly. “Are my hopes but delusions? Has my life been but one idle, though convulsive dream? Is the goddess of our religion banished from this great and populous earth, to the seared and barren hearts of a few solitary worshippers whom all else despise as madmen or persecute as idolaters? And if so, shall we adore her the less? No! though we perish in her cause, it is around her altar that our corpses shall be found!”

“My friend,” said Glendower, kindly, for he was touched by the sincerity, though opposed to the opin-

ions of the republican, "the night is yet early; we will sit down to discuss our several doctrines calmly, and in the spirit of truth and investigation."

"Away!" cried Wolfe, rising and slouching his hat over his bent and lowering brows, — "away! I will not listen to you; I dread your reasonings, — I would not have a particle of my faith shaken. If I err, I have erred from my birth: erred with Brutus and Tell, Hampden and Milton, and all whom the thousand tribes and parties of earth consecrate with their common gratitude and eternal reverence. In that error I will die! If our party can struggle not with hosts, there may yet arise some minister with the ambition of Cæsar, if not his genius, of whom a single dagger can rid the earth!"

"And if not!" said Glendower.

"I have the same dagger for myself!" replied Wolfe, as he closed the door.

CHAPTER XLI.

Bolingbroke has said that, "Man is his own sharper and his own bubble;" and certainly he who is acutest in duping others is ever the most ingenious in outwitting himself. The criminal is always a sophist, and finds in his own reason a special pleader to twist laws human and divine into a sanction of his crime. The rogue is so much in the habit of cheating, that he packs the cards even when playing at Patience with himself. — STEPHEN MONTAGUE.

THE only two acquaintances in this populous city whom Glendower possessed, who were aware that in a former time he had known a better fortune, were Wolfe, and a person of far higher worldly estimation, of the name of Crauford. With the former, the student had become acquainted by the favor of chance, which had for a short time made them lodgers in the same house. Of the particulars of Glendower's earliest history, Wolfe was utterly ignorant; but the addresses upon some old letters which he had accidentally seen, had informed him that Glendower had formerly borne another name,—and it was easy to glean from the student's conversation that something of greater distinction and prosperity than he now enjoyed was coupled with the appellation he had renounced. Proud, melancholy, austere,—brooding upon thoughts whose very loftiness received somewhat of additional grandeur from the gloom which encircled it,—Glendower found, in the ruined hopes and the solitary lot of the republican, that congeniality which neither Wolfe's habits, nor the excess of his political fervor, might have afforded to a

nature which philosophy had rendered moderate and early circumstances refined. Crauford was far better acquainted than Wolfe with the reverses Glendower had undergone. Many years ago, he had known, and indeed travelled with him upon the Continent; since then, they had not met till about six months prior to the time in which Glendower is presented to the reader. It was in an obscure street of the city that Crauford had then encountered Glendower, whose haunts were so little frequented by the higher orders of society that Crauford was the first, and the only one, of his former acquaintance with whom for years he had been brought into contact. That person recognized him at once, accosted him, followed him home, and three days afterwards, surprised him with a visit. Of manners which, in their dissimulation, extended far beyond the ordinary ease and breeding of the world, Crauford readily appeared not to notice the altered circumstances of his old acquaintance; and by a tone of conversation artfully respectful, he endeavored to remove from Glendower's mind that soreness which his knowledge of human nature told him his visit was calculated to create.

There is a certain species of pride which contradicts the ordinary symptoms of the feeling, and appears most elevated when it would be reasonable to expect it should be most depressed. Of this sort was Glendower's. When he received the guest who had known him in his former prosperity, some natural sentiment of emotion called, it is true, to his pale cheek a momentary flush, as he looked round his humble apartment, and the evident signs of poverty it contained; but his address was calm and self-possessed, and whatever mortification he might have felt, no intonation of his voice, no tell-tale embarrassment of manner, revealed it. Encouraged by

this air, even while he was secretly vexed by it, and perfectly unable to do justice to the dignity of mind which gave something of majesty, rather than humiliation, to misfortune, Crauford resolved to repeat his visit, and by intervals, gradually lessening, renewed it, till acquaintance seemed, though little tinctured, at least on Glendower's side, by *friendship*, to assume the semblance of *intimacy*. It was true, however, that he had something to struggle against in Glendower's manner, which certainly grew colder in proportion to the repetition of the visits; and at length Glendower said, with an ease and quiet which abashed, for a moment, an effrontery both of mind and manner which was almost parallel, "Believe me, Mr. Crauford, I feel fully sensible of your attentions; but as circumstances at present are such as to render an intercourse between us little congenial to the habits and sentiments of either, you will probably understand and forgive my motives in wishing no longer to receive civilities which, however I may feel them, I am unable to return."

Crauford colored, and hesitated, before he replied: "Forgive me then," said he, "for my fault. I did venture to hope that no circumstances would break off an acquaintance to me so valuable. Forgive me if I did imagine that an intercourse between mind and mind could be equally carried on, whether the mere body were lodged in a palace or a hovel;" and then suddenly changing his tone into that of affectionate warmth, Crauford continued: "My dear Glendower, my dear friend, I would say, if I durst, is not your pride rather to blame here? Believe me, in my turn, I fully comprehend and bow to it; but it wounds me beyond expression. Were you in your proper station, a station much higher than my own, I would come to you at once and proffer

my friendship, — as it is, I cannot; but your pride wrongs me, Glendower, — indeed it does.”

And Crauford turned away, apparently in the bitterness of wounded feeling.

Glendower was touched; and his nature, as kind as it was proud, immediately smote him for conduct certainly ungracious, and perhaps ungrateful. He held out his hand to Crauford; with the most respectful warmth, that personage seized and pressed it; and from that time Crauford's visits appeared to receive a license which, if not perfectly welcome, was at least never again questioned.

“I shall have this man now,” muttered Crauford, between his ground teeth, as he left the house and took his way to his counting-house. There, cool, bland, fawning, and weaving in his close and dark mind various speculations of guilt and craft, he sat among his bills and gold, like the very gnome and personification of that Mammon of gain to which he was the most supple, though concealed, adherent.

Richard Crauford was of a new but not unimportant family. His father had entered into commerce, and left a flourishing firm, and a name of great respectability in his profession, to his son. That son was a man whom many and opposite qualities rendered a character of very singular and uncommon stamp. Fond of the laborious acquisition of money, he was equally attached to the ostentatious pageantries of expense. Profoundly skilled in the calculating business of his profession, he was devoted equally to the luxuries of pleasure; but the pleasure was suited well to the mind which pursued it. The divine intoxication of that love where the delicacies and purities of affection consecrate the humanity of passion, was to him a thing of which not even his

youngest imagination had ever dreamed. The social concomitants of the wine-cup (which have for the lenient an excuse, for the austere a temptation), the generous expanding of the heart, the increased yearning to kindly affection, the lavish spirit throwing off its exuberance in the thousand lights and emanations of wit, — these, which have rendered the molten grape, despite of its excesses, not unworthy of the praises of immortal hymns, and taken harshness from the judgment of those averse to its enjoyment: these never presented an inducement to the stony temperament and dormant heart of Richard Crauford.

He looked upon the essences of things internal as the common eye upon outward nature, and loved the many shapes of evil as the latter does the varieties of earth, not for their graces, but their utility. His loves, coarse and low, fed their rank fires from an unmingled and gross depravity. His devotion to wine was either solitary and unseen, — for he loved safety better than mirth, — or in company with those whose station flattered his vanity, not whose fellowship ripened his crude and nipped affections. Even the recklessness of vice in him had the character of prudence; and in the most rapid and turbulent stream of his excesses, one might detect the rocky and unmoved heart of the calculator at the bottom.

Cool, sagacious, profound in dissimulation, and not only observant of, but deducing sage consequences from those human inconsistencies and frailties by which it was his aim to profit, he cloaked his deeper vices with a masterly hypocrisy; and for those, too dear to forego and too difficult to conceal, he obtained pardon by the intercession of virtues it cost him nothing to assume. Regular in his attendance at worship; professing rigid-

ness of faith beyond the tenets of the orthodox church; subscribing to the public charities, where the common eye knoweth what the private hand giveth; methodically constant to the forms of business; primitively scrupulous in the proprieties of speech; hospitable, at least to his superiors; and being naturally smooth, both of temper and address, popular with his inferiors, — it was no marvel that one part of the world forgave, to a man rich and young, the irregularities of dissipation; that another forgot real immorality in favor of affected religion, — or that the remainder allowed the most unexceptionable excellence of words to atone for the unobtrusive errors of a conduct which did not prejudice *them*.

“It is true,” said his friends, “that he loves women too much; but he is young, — he will marry and amend.”

Mr. Crauford did marry; and, strange as it may seem, for love, — at least for that brute-like love of which alone he was capable. After a few years of ill-usage on his side, and endurance on his wife’s, they parted. Tired of her person, and profiting by her gentleness of temper, he sent her to an obscure corner of the country, to starve upon the miserable pittance which was all he allowed her from his superfluities. Even then — such is the effect of the showy proprieties of form and word — Mr. Crauford sank not in the estimation of the world.

“It was easy to see,” said the spectators of his domestic drama, “that a man in temper so mild, in his business so honorable, so civil of speech, so attentive to the stocks and the sermon, could not have been the party to blame. One never knew the rights of matrimonial disagreements, nor could sufficiently estimate the provoking disparities of temper. Certainly, Mrs. Crauford never did look in good humor, and had not the open

countenance of her husband; and certainly the very excesses of Mr. Crauford betokened a generous warmth of heart, which the sullenness of his conjugal partner might easily chill and revolt."

And thus, unquestioned and unblamed, Mr. Crauford walked onward in his beaten way; and, secretly laughing at the toleration of the crowd, continued at his luxurious villa the orgies of a passionless yet brutal sensuality.

So far might the character of Richard Crauford find parallels in hypocrisy and its success. Dive we now deeper into his soul. Possessed of talents which, though of a secondary rank, were in that rank consummate, Mr. Crauford could not be a villain by intuition, or the irregular bias of his nature; he was a villain upon a grander scale: he was a villain upon system. Having little learning and less knowledge, out of his profession, his reflection expended itself upon apparently obvious deductions from the great and mysterious book of life. He saw vice prosperous in externals, and from this sight his conclusion was drawn. "Vice," said he, "is not an obstacle to success; and, if so, it is at least a pleasanter road to it than your narrow and thorny ways of virtue." But there are certain vices which require the mask of virtue, and Crauford thought it easier to wear the mask than to school his soul to the reality. So to the villain he added the hypocrite. He found the success equalled his hopes; for he had both craft and genius, — nor was he, naturally, without the minor amiabilities, which, to the ignorance of the herd, seem more valuable than coin of a more important amount. Blinded as we are by prejudice, we not only *mistake*, but *prefer* decencies to moralities; and like the inhabitants of Cos when offered the choice of two statues of the same goddess, we

choose, not that which is the most beautiful, but that which is the most dressed.

Accustomed easily to dupe mankind, Crauford soon grew to despise them; and from justifying roguery by his own interest, he now justified it by the folly of others; and as no wretch is so unredeemed as to be without excuse to himself, Crauford actually persuaded his reason that he was vicious upon principle, and a rascal on a system of morality. But why the desire of this man, so consummately worldly and heartless, for an intimacy with the impoverished and powerless student? This question is easily answered. In the first place, during Crauford's acquaintance with Glendower abroad, the latter had often, though innocently, galled the vanity and self-pride of the *parvenu* affecting the aristocrat, and in poverty the *parvenu* was anxious to retaliate. But this desire would probably have passed away after he had satisfied his curiosity, or gloated his spite, by one or two insights into Glendower's home, — for Crauford, though at times a malicious, was not a vindictive man, — had it not been for a much more powerful object which afterwards occurred to him. In an extensive scheme of fraud, which for many years this man had carried on, and which for secrecy and boldness was almost unequalled, it had of late become necessary to his safety to have a partner, or rather tool. A man of education, talent, and courage was indispensable, and Crauford had resolved that Glendower should be that man. With the supreme confidence in his own powers which long success had given him; with a sovereign contempt for, or rather disbelief in human integrity; and with a thorough conviction, that the bribe to him was the bribe with all, and that none could on any account be poor if they had the offer to be rich, — Crauford

did not bestow a moment's consideration upon the difficulty of his task, or conceive that in the nature and mind of Glendower there could exist any obstacle to his design.

Men addicted to calculation are accustomed to suppose those employed in the same mental pursuit arrive, or ought to arrive, at the same final conclusion. Now, looking upon Glendower as a philosopher, Crauford looked upon him as a man who, however he might conceal his real opinions, secretly laughed like Crauford's self, not only at the established customs, but at the established moralities of the world. Ill acquainted with books, the worthy Richard was, like all men similarly situated, somewhat infected by the very prejudices he affected to despise; and he shared the vulgar disposition to doubt the hearts of those who cultivate the head. Glendower himself had confirmed this opinion by lauding, though he did not entirely subscribe to those moralists who have made an enlightened self-interest the proper measure of all human conduct; and Crauford, utterly unable to comprehend this system in its grand, naturally interpreted it in a partial sense. Espousing self-interest as his own code, he deemed that in reality Glendower's principles did not differ greatly from his; and as there is no pleasure to a hypocrite like that of finding a fit opportunity to unburden some of his real sentiments, Crauford was occasionally wont to hold some conference and argument with the student, in which his opinions were not utterly cloaked in their usual disguise; but cautious even in his candor, he always forbore stating such opinions as his own: he merely mentioned them as those which a man, beholding the villanies and follies of his kind might be tempted to form; and thus Glendower, though not greatly

esteeming his acquaintance, looked upon him as one ignorant in his opinions, but not likely to err in his conduct.

These conversations did, however, it is true, increase Crauford's estimate of Glendower's integrity, but they by no means diminished his confidence of subduing it. Honor, a deep and pure sense of the divinity of good, the steady desire of rectitude, and the supporting aid of a sincere religion, — these he did not deny to his intended tool; he rather rejoiced that he possessed them. With the profound arrogance, the sense of immeasurable superiority which men of no principle invariably feel for those who have it, Crauford said to himself, "Those very virtues will be my best dupes, — they cannot resist the temptations I shall offer, but they can resist any offer to betray me afterwards, for no man can resist hunger; but your fine feelings, your nice honor, your precise religion, — he! he! he! — these can teach a man very well to resist a common inducement: they cannot make him submit to be his own executioner; but they can prevent his turning king's evidence, and being executioner to another. No, no; it is not to your common rogues that I may dare trust my secret, — *my* secret, which is my life! It is precisely of such a fine, Athenian, moral rogue as I shall make my proud friend, that I am in want. But he has some silly scruples; we must beat them away. We must not be too rash; and, above all, we must leave the best argument to poverty. Want is your finest orator: a starving wife, a famished brat, — he! he! — these are your true tempters, your true fathers of crime, and fillers of jails and gibbets. Let me see: he has no money, I know, but what he gets from that bookseller. What bookseller, by the by? Ah, rare thought! I'll find out, and cut off that supply. My lady wife's cheek

will look somewhat thinner next month, I fancy, — he! he! But 't is a pity, for she is a glorious creature! Who knows but I may serve two purposes? However, one at present! business first and pleasure afterwards, — and faith, the business is damnably like that of life and death."

Muttering such thoughts as these, Crauford took his way one evening to Glendower's house.

CHAPTER XLII.

Iago. — Virtue ; a fig ! — 't is in ourselves that we are thus and thus.
Othello.

“So, so, my little one, don't let me disturb you. Madam, dare I venture to hope your acceptance of this fruit? I chose it myself, and I am somewhat of a judge. Oh! Glendower, here is the pamphlet you wished to see.”

With this salutation, Crauford drew his chair to the table by which Glendower sat, and entered into conversation with his purposed victim. A comely and a pleasing countenance had Richard Crauford! — the lonely light of the room fell upon a face which, though forty years of guile had gone over it, was as fair and un-wrinkled as a boy's. Small, well-cut features, a blooming complexion, eyes of the lightest blue, a forehead high, though narrow, and a mouth from which the smile was never absent: these, joined to a manner at once soft and confident, and an elegant, though unaffected study of dress, gave to Crauford a personal appearance well suited to aid the effect of his hypocritical and dissembling mind.

“Well, my friend,” said he, “always at your books, eh! Ah! it is a happy taste: would that I had cultivated it more; but we, who are condemned to business, have little leisure to follow our own inclinations. It is only on Sundays that I have time to read; and then (to say truth, I am an old-fashioned man whom the gayer part of the world laughs at), — and then I am too

occupied with the Book of Books to think of any less important study."

Not deeming that a peculiar reply was required to this pious speech, Glendower did not take that advantage of Crauford's pause which it was evidently intended that he should. With a glance towards the student's wife, our mercantile friend continued: "I did once — once, in my young dreams, intend that whenever I married, I would relinquish a profession for which, after all, I am but little calculated. I pictured to myself a country retreat, well stored with books; and having concentrated in one home all the attractions which could have tempted my thoughts abroad, I had designed to surrender myself solely to those studies which, I lament to say, were but ill attended to in my earlier education. But — but" (here Mr. Crauford sighed deeply, and averted his face) — "fate willed it otherwise."

Whatever reply of sympathetic admiration or condolence Glendower might have made, was interrupted by one of those sudden and overpowering attacks of faintness which had of late seized the delicate and declining health of his wife. He rose, and leaned over her with a fondness and alarm which curled the lip of his visitor.

"Thus it is," said Crauford to himself, "with weak minds, under the influence of habit. The love of lust becomes the love of custom, and the last is as strong as the first."

When she had recovered, she rose and (with her child) retired to rest, the only restorative she ever found effectual for her complaint. Glendower went with her, and after having seen her eyes, which swam with tears of gratitude at his love, close in the seeming slumber she affected in order to release him from his

watch, he returned to Crauford. He found that gentleman leaning against the chimney-piece, with folded arms, and apparently immersed in thought. A very good opportunity had Glendower's absence afforded to a man whose boast it was never to lose one. Looking over the papers on the table, he had seen and possessed himself of the address of the bookseller the student dealt with. "So much for business, — now for philanthropy," said Mr. Crauford, in his favorite antithetical phrase, throwing himself in his attitude against the chimney-piece.

As Glendower entered, Crauford started from his reverie, and with a melancholy air and pensive voice, said, —

"Alas, my friend, when I look upon this humble apartment, the weak health of your unequalled wife, your obscurity, your misfortune, — when I look upon these, and contrast them with your mind, your talents, all that you were born and fitted for, I cannot but feel tempted to believe with those who imagine the pursuit of virtue a chimera, and who justify their own worldly policy by the example of all their kind."

"Virtue," said Glendower, "would indeed be a chimera, did it require support from those whom you have cited."

"True, — most true," answered Crauford, somewhat disconcerted in reality, though not in appearance; "and yet, strange as it may seem, I have known some of those persons very good, admirably good men. They were extremely moral and religious; they only played the great game for worldly advantages upon the same terms as the other players; nay, they never made a move in it without most fervently and sincerely praying for divine assistance."

"I readily believe you," said Glendower, who always, if possible, avoided a controversy, — "the easiest person to deceive is one's own self."

"Admirably said," answered Crauford, who thought it, nevertheless, one of the most foolish observations he had ever heard, — "admirably said! — and yet my heart does grieve bitterly for the trials and distresses it surveys. One must make excuses for poor human frailty; and one is often placed in such circumstances as to render it scarcely possible, without the grace of God" (here Crauford lifted up his eyes), "not to be urged, as it were, into the reasonings and actions of the world."

Not exactly comprehending this observation, and not very closely attending to it, Glendower merely bowed, as in assent, and Crauford continued.

"I remember a remarkable instance of this truth. One of my partner's clerks had, through misfortune or imprudence, fallen into the greatest distress. His wife, his children (he had a numerous family), were on the literal and absolute verge of starvation. Another clerk, taking advantage of these circumstances, communicated to the distressed man a plan for defrauding his employer. The poor fellow yielded to the temptation, and was at last discovered. I spoke to him myself, for I was interested in his fate, and had always esteemed him. 'What,' said I, 'was your motive for this fraud?' 'My duty!' answered the man fervently, — 'my duty! Was I to suffer my wife, my children, to starve before my face, when I could save them at a little personal risk? No, — my duty forbade it!' — and in truth, Glendower, there was something very plausible in this manner of putting the question."

"You might, in answering it," said Glendower, "have put the point in a manner equally plausible

and more true: was he to commit a great crime against the millions connected by social order, for the sake of serving a single family, — and that his own?"

"Quite right," answered Crauford, — "that was just the point of view in which I did put it; but the man, who was something of a reasoner, replied: 'Public law is instituted for public happiness. Now if *mine* and my children's happiness is infinitely and immeasurably more served by this comparatively petty fraud than my employer's is advanced by my abstaining from, or injured by my committing it, why, the origin of law itself allows me to do it.' What say you to that, Glendower? It is something in your Utilitarian, or, as you term it, Epicurean¹ principle, is it not?" and Crauford, shading his eyes, as if from the light, watched narrowly Glendower's countenance, while he concealed his own.

"Poor fool!" said Glendower: "the man was ignorant of the first lesson in his moral primer. Did he not know that no rule is to be applied to a peculiar instance, but extended to its most general bearings? Is it necessary even to observe that the particular consequence of fraud in this man might, it is true, be but the ridding his employer of superfluities, scarcely missed, for the relief of most urgent want in two or three individuals; but the general consequences of fraud and treachery would be the disorganization of all society? Do not think, therefore, that this man was a disciple of my, or of any system of morality."

"It is very just, very," said Mr. Crauford, with a

¹ See the article on Mr. Moore's Epicurean, in the "Westminster Review." Though the strictures on that work are harsh and unjust, yet the part relating to the real philosophy of Epicurus is one of the most masterly things in criticism.

benevolent sigh; "but you will own that want seldom allows great nicety in moral distinctions, and that, when those whom you love most in the world are starving, you may be pitied, if not forgiven, for losing sight of the after laws of nature, and recurring to her first ordinance, self-preservation."

"We should be harsh indeed," answered Glendower, "if we did not pity; or even while the law condemned, if the individual did not forgive."

"So I said, so I said," cried Crauford; "and in interceding for the poor fellow, whose pardon, I am happy to say, I procured, I could not help declaring that, if I were placed in the same circumstances, I am not sure that my crime would not have been the same."

"No man *could* feel sure!" said Glendower, dejectedly.

Delighted and surprised with this confession, Crauford continued: "I believe; — I fear not. Thank God, *our* virtue can never be so tried; but even you, Glendower, even *you*, philosopher, moralist as you are, — just, good, wise, religious, — even you might be tempted, if you saw your angel wife dying for want of the aid, the very sustenance necessary to existence, and your innocent and beautiful daughter stretch her little hands to you, and cry in the accents of famine for bread."

The student made no reply for a few moments, but averted his countenance, and then in a slow tone said, "Let us drop this subject: none know their strength till they are tried; self-confidence should accompany virtue, but not precede it."

A momentary flash broke from the usually calm, cold eye of Richard Crauford. "He is mine," thought he: "the very name of want abases his pride; what will the reality do? O human nature, how I know and mock thee!"

"You are right," said Crauford, aloud; "let us talk of the pamphlet."

And after a short conversation upon indifferent subjects, the visitor departed.

Early the next morning was Mr. Crauford seen on foot, taking his way to the bookseller, whose address he had learned. The bookseller was known as a man of a strongly evangelical bias. "We must insinuate a lie or two," said Crauford, inly, "about Glendower's principles. He! he! it will be a fine stroke of genius to make the upright tradesman suffer Glendower to starve, out of a principle of religion. But who would have thought my prey had been so easily snared!—why, if I had proposed the matter last night, I verily think he would have agreed to it."

Amusing himself with these thoughts, Crauford arrived at the bookseller's. There he found fate had saved him from one crime at least. The whole house was in confusion,—the bookseller had that morning died of an apoplectic fit.

"Good God! how shocking!" said Crauford to the foreman; "but he was a most worthy man, and Providence could no longer spare him. The ways of Heaven are inscrutable! Oblige me with three copies of that precious tract termed the 'Divine Call.' I should like to be allowed permission to attend the funeral of so excellent a man. Good-morning, sir,—alas! alas;" and, shaking his head piteously, Mr. Crauford left the shop.

"Hurrah!" said he, almost audibly, when he was once more in the street,— "hurrah! my victim is made, my game is won: death or the devil fights for me. But, hold: there are other booksellers in this monstrous city!—ay, but not above two or three in our philosopher's way. I must forestall him there; so, so,—that is soon

settled. Now, then, I must leave him, a little while undisturbed, to his fate. Perhaps my next visit may be to him in jail; your debtor's side of the Fleet is almost as good a pleader as an empty stomach, — he! he! he! — but the stroke must be made soon, for time presses, and this d—d business spreads so fast that if I don't have a speedy help, it will be too much for my hands, griping as they are. However, if it holds on a year longer, I will change my seat in the Lower House for one in the Upper; twenty thousand pounds to the minister may make a merchant a very pretty peer. O brave Richard Crauford, wise Richard Crauford, fortunate Richard Crauford, *noble* Richard Crauford! Why, if thou art ever hanged, it will be by a jury of *peers*. Gad, the rope would then have a dignity in it instead of disgrace. But stay, here comes the Dean of —; not orthodox, it is said, — rigid Calvinist! — out with the 'Divine Call'!"

When Mr. Richard Crauford repaired next to Glendower, what was his astonishment and dismay at hearing he had left his home, none knew whither, nor could give the inquirer the slightest clew.

"How long has he left?" said Crauford to the landlady.

"Five days, sir."

"And will he not return to settle any little debts he may have incurred?" said Crauford.

"Oh, no; sir, — he paid them all before he went. Poor gentleman, — for though he was poor, he was the finest and most thorough gentleman I ever saw! — my heart bled for him. They parted with all their valuables to discharge their debts: the books and instruments and busts, — all went; and what I saw, though he spoke so indifferently about it, hurt him the most,

—he sold even the lady's picture. 'Mrs. Croftson,' said he, 'Mr. —, the painter, will send for that picture the day after I leave you. See that he has it, and that the greatest care is taken of it in delivery.' "

"And you cannot even guess where he has gone to?"

"No, sir; a single porter was sufficient to convey his remaining goods, and he took him from some distant part of the town."

"Ten thousand devils!" muttered Crauford, as he turned away, "I should have foreseen this! He is lost now. Of course he will again change his name; and in the d—d holes and corners of this gigantic puzzle of houses, how shall I ever find him out?—and time presses too! Well, well, well! there is a fine prize for being cleverer, or, as fools would say, more rascally than others; but there is a world of trouble in winning it. But come,—I will go home, lock myself up, and get drunk! I am as melancholy as a cat in love, and about as stupid; and, faith, one must get spirits in order to hit on a new invention. But if there be consistency in fortune, or success in perseverance, or wit in Richard Crauford, that man shall yet be my victim—and preserver!"

CHAPTER XLIII.

Revenge is now the cud
That I do chew. — I'll challenge him.

BEAUMONT AND FLETCHER.

WE return to "the world of fashion," as the admirers of the polite novel of — would say. The noonday sun broke hot and sultry through half-closed curtains of roseate silk, playing in broken beams upon rare and fragrant exotics, which cast the perfumes of southern summers over a chamber, moderate, indeed, as to its dimensions, but decorated with a splendor rather gaudy than graceful, and indicating much more a passion for luxury than a refinement of taste.

At a small writing-table sat the beautiful La Meronville. She had just finished a note, written (how Jean Jacques would have been enchanted!) upon paper *couleur de rose*, with a mother-of-pearl pen, formed as one of Cupid's darts, dipped into an inkstand of the same material, which was shaped as a quiver, and placed at the back of a little Love, exquisitely wrought. She was folding this billet when a page, fantastically dressed, entered, and announcing Lord Borodaile, was immediately followed by that nobleman. Eagerly and almost blushing did La Meronville thrust the note into her bosom, and hasten to greet and to embrace her adorer. Lord Borodaile flung himself on one of the sofas with a listless and discontented air. The experienced Frenchwoman saw that there was a cloud on his brow.

"My dear friend," said she, in her own tongue, "you seem vexed, — has anything annoyed you?"

VOL. I. — 19

"No, Cecile, no. By the by, who supped with you last night?"

"Oh! the Duke of Haverfield, — your friend."

"My friend!" interrupted Borodaile, haughtily, — "he's no friend of mine: a vulgar, talkative fellow, — my friend, indeed!"

"Well, I beg your pardon: then there was Mademoiselle Caumartin, and the Prince Pietro del Orbino, and Mr. Trevanion, and Mr. Lin — Lin — Linten, or Linden."

"And, pray, will you allow me to ask how you became acquainted with Mr. Lin — Lin — Linten, or Linden?"

"Assuredly, — through the Duke of Haverfield."

"Humph, Cecile, my love, that young man is not fit to be the acquaintance of my friend; allow me to strike him from your list."

"Certainly, certainly!" said La Meronville, hastily; and stooping as if to pick up a fallen glove, though in reality to hide her face from Lord Borodaile's searching eye, the letter she had written fell from her bosom. Lord Borodaile's glance detected the superscription, and before La Meronville could regain the note, he had possessed himself of it.

"A Monsieur, Monsieur Linden!" said he, coldly, reading the address; "and pray, how long have you corresponded with that gentleman?"

Now La Meronville's situation at that moment was by no means agreeable. She saw at one glance that no falsehood or artifice could avail her; for Lord Borodaile might deem himself fully justified in reading the note, which would contradict any glossing statement she might make. She saw this. She was a woman of independence, cared not a straw for Lord Borodaile at

present, though she *had* had a caprice for him, knew that she might choose her *bon ami* out of all London, and replied, —

“That is the first letter I ever wrote to him; but I own that it will not be the last.”

Lord Borodaile turned pale.

“And will you suffer me to read it?” said he; for even in these cases he was punctiliously honorable.

La Meronville hesitated. She did not know him. “If I do not consent,” thought she, “he will do it without the consent: better submit with a good grace.—Certainly!” she answered, with an air of indifference.

Borodaile opened and read the note; it was as follows: —

You have inspired me with a feeling for you which astonishes myself. Ah, why should that love be the strongest which is the swiftest in its growth? I used to love Lord Borodaile; I now only esteem him,—the love has flown to you. If I judge rightly from your words and your eyes, this avowal will not be unwelcome to you. Come and assure me, in person, of a persuasion so dear to my heart.

C. L. M.

“A very pretty effusion!” said Lord Borodaile, sarcastically, and only showing his inward rage by the increasing paleness of his complexion, and a slight compression of his lip. “I thank you for your confidence in me. All I ask is, that you will not send this note till to-morrow. Allow me to take my leave of you first, and to find in Mr. Linden a successor rather than a rival.”

“Your request, my friend,” said La Meronville, adjusting her hair, “is but reasonable. I see that you understand these arrangements; and, for my part, I think that the end of love should always be the beginning of friendship, — let it be so with us!”

"You do me too much honor," said Borodaile, bowing profoundly. "Meanwhile, I depend upon your promise, and bid you, as a lover, farewell forever."

With his usual slow step, Lord Borodaile descended the stairs, and walked towards the central *quartier* of the town. His meditations were of no soothing nature. "To be seen by that man in a ridiculous and degrading situation, to be pestered with his d—d civility, to be rivalled by him with Lady Flora, to be duped and outdone by him with my mistress! Ay, — all this have I been; but vengeance shall come yet. As for La Meronville, the loss is a gain; and, thank Heaven, I did not betray myself by venting my passion and making a scene. But it was I who ought to have discarded her, — not the reverse; and — death and confusion — for that upstart, above all men! And she talked in her letter about his eyes and words. Insolent coxcomb, to dare to have eyes and words for one who belonged to me. Well, well, he shall smart for this. But let me consider: I must not play the jealous fool, must not fight for a —, must not show the world that a man, nobody knows who, could really outwit and outdo *me* — me, Francis Borodaile! No, no; I must throw the insult upon him: must myself be the aggressor and the challenged; then, too, I shall have the choice of weapons, — pistols, of course. Where shall I hit him, by the by? I wish I shot as well as I used to do at Naples. I was in full practice then. Cursed place, where there was nothing else to do but to practise!"

Immersed in these, or somewhat similar reflections, did Lord Borodaile enter Pall Mall.

"Ah, Borodaile!" said Lord St. George, suddenly emerging from a shop. "This is really fortunate: you are going my way exactly, — allow me to join you."

Now Lord Borodaile, to say nothing of his happening at that time to be in a mood more than usually unsocial, could never at *any* time bear the thought of being made an instrument of convenience, pleasure, or good fortune to another. He therefore, with a little resentment at Lord St. George's familiarity, coldly replied, "I am sorry that I cannot avail myself of your offer. I am sure my way is *not* the same as yours."

"Then," replied Lord St. George, who was a good-natured, indolent man, who imagined everybody was as averse to walking alone as he was, — "then I will make *mine* the same as yours."

Borodaile colored: though always uncivil, he did not like to be excelled in good manners; and therefore replied, that nothing but extreme business at White's could have induced him to prefer his own way to that of Lord St. George.

The good-natured peer took Lord Borodaile's arm. It was a natural incident, but it vexed the punctilious viscount, that any man should *take*, not *offer* the support.

"So, they say," observed Lord St. George, "that young Linden is to marry Lady Flora Ardenne."

"*Les on-dits font la gazette des fous*," rejoined Borodaile, with a sneer. "I believe that Lady Flora is little likely to contract such a *mésalliance*."

"*Mésalliance!*" replied Lord St. George. "I thought Linden was of a very old family, which you know the Westboroughs are not, and he has great expectations —"

"Which are never to be realized," interrupted Borodaile, laughing scornfully.

"Ah, indeed!" said Lord St. George, seriously. "Well, at all events, he is a very agreeable, unaffected young man, — and by the by, Borodaile, you will

meet him *chez moi* to-day: you know you dine with me?"

"Meet Mr. Linden! I shall be proud to have that honor," said Borodaile, with sparkling eyes; "will Lady Westborough be also of the party?"

"No; poor Lady St. George is very ill, and I have taken the opportunity to ask only men."

"You have done wisely, my lord," said Borodaile, *secum multa revolvens*; "and I assure you I wanted no hint to remind me of your invitation."

Here the Duke of Haverfield joined them. The duke never bowed to any one of the male sex; he therefore *nodded* to Borodaile, who, with a very supercilious formality, took off his hat in returning the salutation. The viscount had at least this merit in his pride: that if it was reserved to the humble, it was contemptuous to the high, — his inferiors he wished to remain where they were; his equals he longed to lower.

"So I dine with you, Lord St. George, to-day," said the duke; "whom shall I meet?"

"Lord Borodaile, for one," answered St. George; "my brother, Aspeden, Findlater, Orbino, and Linden."

"Linden!" cried the duke; "I'm very glad to hear it, *c'est un homme fait exprès pour moi*. He is very clever, and not above playing the fool; has humor without setting up for a wit, and is a good fellow without being a bad man. I like him excessively."

"Lord St. George," said Borodaile, who seemed that day to be the very martyr of the unconscious Clarence, "I wish you good-morning. I have only just remembered an engagement which I *must* keep before I go to White's."

And, with a bow to the duke, and a remonstrance from Lord St. George, Borodaile effected his escape. His

complexion was, insensibly to himself, more raised than usual, his step more stately; his mind, for the first time for years, was fully excited and engrossed. Ah, what a delightful thing it is for an idle man, who has been dying of *ennui*, to find an enemy.

CHAPTER XLIV.

You must challenge him;
There's no avoiding, — one or both must drop.
BEAUMONT AND FLETCHER.

"HA, ha, ha, — bravo, Linden!" cried Lord St. George, from the head of his splendid board, in approbation of some witticism of Clarence's; and ha, ha, ha! or he, he, he! according to the cachinnatory intonations of the guests, rang around.

"Your lordship seems unwell," said Lord Aspeden to Borodaile; "allow me to take wine with you."

Lord Borodaile bowed his assent.

"Pray," said Mr. St. George to Clarence, "have you seen my friend Talbot lately?"

"This very morning," replied Linden: "indeed, I generally visit him three or four times a week, — he often asks after you."

"Indeed!" said Mr. St. George, rather flattered: "he does me much honor, — but he is a distant connection of mine, and I suppose I must attribute his recollection of me to that cause. He is a near relation of yours too, I think, — is he not?"

"I *am* related to him," answered Clarence, coloring.

Lord Borodaile leaned forward, and his lip curled. Though in some respects a very unamiable man, he had, as we have said, his good points. He hated a lie as much as Achilles did; and he believed in his heart of hearts that Clarence had just uttered one.

"Why," observed Lord Aspeden, — "why, Lord Borodaile, the Talbots of Scarsdale are branches of *your*

genealogical tree; therefore your lordship must be related to Linden: you are 'two cherries on one stalk!'"

"We are by no means related," said Lord Borodaile, with a distinct and clear voice, intended expressly for Clarence; "that is an honor which I must beg leave most positively to disclaim."

There was a dead silence, — the eyes of all who heard a remark so intentionally rude were turned immediately towards Clarence. His cheek burned like fire; he hesitated a moment, and then said, in the same key, though with a little trembling in his intonation, —

"Lord Borodaile cannot be more anxious to disclaim it than I am."

"And yet," returned the viscount, stung to the soul, "they who advance false pretensions ought at least to support them!"

"I do not understand you, my lord," said Clarence.

"Possibly not," answered Borodaile, carelessly: "there is a maxim which says that people not accustomed to speak truth cannot comprehend it in others."

Unlike the generality of modern heroes, who are always in a passion, — off-hand, dashing fellows, in whom irascibility is a virtue, — Clarence was peculiarly sweet-tempered by nature, and had, by habit, acquired a command over all his passions to a degree very uncommon in so young a man. He made no reply to the inexcusable affront he had received. His lip quivered a little, and the flush of his countenance was succeeded by an extreme paleness, — this was all: he did not even leave the room immediately, but waited till the silence was broken by some well-bred member of the party; and then, pleading an early engagement as an excuse for his retiring so soon, he rose, and departed.

There was throughout the room a universal feeling of

sympathy with the affront, and indignation against the offender; for, to say nothing of Clarence's popularity, and the extreme dislike in which Lord Borodaile was held, there could be no doubt as to the wantonness of the outrage, or the moderation of the aggrieved party. Lord Borodaile already felt the punishment of his offence: his very pride, while it rendered him indifferent to the spirit, had hitherto kept him scrupulous as to the formalities of social politeness; and he could not but see the grossness with which he had suffered himself to violate them, and the light in which his conduct was regarded. However, this internal discomfort only rendered him the more embittered against Clarence, and the more confirmed in his revenge. Resuming, by a strong effort, all the external indifference habitual to his manner, he attempted to enter into a conversation with those of the party who were next to him; but his remarks produced answers brief and cold. Even Lord Aspeden forgot his diplomacy and his smile; Lord St. George replied to his observations by a monosyllable; and the Duke of Haverfield, for the first time in his life, asserted the prerogative which his rank gave him of setting the example, — his grace did not reply to Lord Borodaile at all. In truth, every one present was seriously displeased. All civilized societies have a paramount interest in repressing the rude. Nevertheless, Lord Borodaile bore the brunt of his unpopularity with a steadiness and unembarrassed composure worthy of a better cause; and finding at last a companion disposed to be loquacious in the person of Sir Christopher Findlater (whose good heart, though its first impulse resented more violently than that of any heart present the discourtesy of the viscount, yet soon warmed to the *désagréments* of his situation, and hastened to adopt its favorite maxim of

forgive and forget), Lord Borodaile sat the meeting out; and if he did not leave the latest, he was, at least, not the first to follow Clarence. "*L'orgueil ou donne le courage, ou il y supplée.*"¹

Meanwhile Linden had returned to his solitary home. He hastened to his room, locked the door, flung himself on his sofa, and burst into a violent and almost feminine paroxysm of tears. This fit lasted for more than an hour; and when Clarence at length stilled the indignant swellings of his heart, and rose from his supine position, he started as his eye fell upon the opposite mirror, so haggard and exhausted seemed the forced and fearful calmness of his countenance. With a hurried step, with arms now folded on his bosom, now wildly tossed from him, and the hand so firmly clenched that the very bones seemed working through the skin, with a brow now fierce, now only dejected, and a complexion which one while burned as with the crimson flush of a fever, and at another was wan and colorless like his whose cheek a spectre has blanched, Clarence paced his apartment, the victim not only of shame,—the bitterest of tortures to a young and high mind,—but of other contending feelings, which alternately exasperated and palsied his wrath, and gave to his resolves at one moment an almost savage ferocity, and at the next, an almost cowardly vacillation.

The clock had just struck the hour of twelve, when a knock at the door announced a visitor. Steps were heard on the stairs, and presently a tap at Clarence's room door. He unlocked it, and the Duke of Haverfield entered.

"I am charmed to find you at home," cried the duke, with his usual half-kind, half-careless address. "I was

¹ Pride either gives courage or supplies the place of it.

determined to call upon you, and be the first to offer my services in this unpleasant affair."

Clarence pressed the duke's hand, but made no answer.

"Nothing could be so unhandsome as Lord Borodaile's conduct," continued the duke. "I hope you both fence and shoot well. I shall never forgive you if you do not put an end to that piece of rigidity."

Clarence continued to walk about the room in great agitation; the duke looked at him with some surprise. At last Linden paused by the window, and said, half unconsciously, "It must be so,—I cannot avoid fighting!"

"Avoid fighting!" cried his grace in undisguised astonishment. "No, indeed; but that is the least part of the matter, — you must kill as well as fight him."

"Kill *him*!" cried Clarence, wildly, "whom!" and then sinking into a chair, he covered his face with his hands for a few moments, and seemed to struggle with his emotions.

"Well," thought the duke, "I never was more mistaken in my life. I could have bet my black horse against Trevanion's Julia, which is certainly the most worthless thing I know, that Linden had been a brave fellow; but these English heroes always go into fits at a duel: one manages such things, as Sterne says, better in France."

Clarence now rose, calm and collected. He sat down, wrote a brief note to Borodaile, demanding the fullest apology, or the earliest meeting, put it into the duke's hands, and said, with a faint smile, "My dear duke, dare I ask you to be second to a man who has been so grievously affronted, and whose genealogy has been so disputed?"

"My dear Linden," said the duke, warmly, "I have

always been grateful to my station in life for this advantage, the freedom with which it has enabled me to select my own acquaintance, and to follow my own pursuits. I am now more grateful to it than ever, because it has given me a better opportunity than I should otherwise have had of serving one whom I have always esteemed. In entering into your quarrel, I shall at least show the world that there are some men, not inferior in pretensions to Lord Borodaile, who despise arrogance and resent overbearance even to others. Your cause I consider the common cause of society; but I shall take it up, if you will allow me, with the distinguishing zeal of a friend."

Clarence, who was much affected by the kindness of this speech, replied in a similar vein; and the duke, having read and approved the letter, rose. "There is, in my opinion," said he, "no time to be lost. I will go to Borodaile this very evening, — adieu, *mon cher*: you shall kill the Argus, and then carry off the Io. I feel in a double passion with that ambulating poker who is only malleable when he is red hot, when I think how honorably scrupulous you were with La Meronville last night, notwithstanding all her advances; but I go to bury Cæsar, not to scold him. *Au revoir*."

CHAPTER XLV.

Conon. — You're well met, Crates.

Crates. — If we part so, Conon.

Queen of Corinth.

It was as might be expected from the character of the aggressor. Lord Borodaile refused all apology, and agreed with avidity to a speedy rendezvous. He chose pistols (choice, then, was not merely nominal), and selected Mr. Percy Bobus for his second, a gentleman who was much fonder of acting in that capacity than in the more honorable one of a principal. The author of "Lacon," says, "that if all seconds were as averse to duels as their principals, there would be very little blood spilled in that way;" and it was certainly astonishing to compare the zeal with which Mr. Bobus busied himself about this "affair," with that testified by him on another occasion, when he himself was more immediately concerned.

The morning came. Bobus breakfasted with his friend. "Damn it, Borodaile," said he, as the latter was receiving the ultimate polish of the hair-dresser, "I never saw you look better in my life. It will be a great pity if that fellow shoots you."

"Shoots *me*!" said Lord Borodaile, very quietly, — "*me*;" — no! that is *quite* out of the question; but, joking apart, Bobus, I will not kill the young man. Where shall I hit him?"

"In the cap of the knee," said Mr. Percy, breaking an egg.

"Nay, that will lame him for life," said Lord Borodaile, putting on his cravat with peculiar exactitude.

"Serve him right," said Mr. Bobus. "Hang him, I never got up so early in my life,—it is quite impossible to eat at this hour. Oh, *à propos*, Borodaile, have you left any little memoranda for me to execute?"

"Memoranda!—for what?" said Borodaile, who had now just finished his toilet.

"Oh!" rejoined Mr. Percy Bobus, "in case of accident, you know: the man may shoot well, though I never saw him in the gallery."

"Pray," said Lord Borodaile, in a great though suppressed passion,— "pray, Mr. Bobus, how often have I to tell you that it is not by Mr. Linden that my days are to terminate; you are sure that Carabine saw to that trigger?"

"Certain," said Mr. Percy, with his mouth full,— "certain. Bless me, here's the carriage, and breakfast not half done yet!"

"Come, come," cried Borodaile, impatiently, "we must breakfast afterwards. Here, Roberts, see that we have fresh chocolate and some more cutlets when we return."

"I would rather have them now," sighed Mr. Bobus, foreseeing the possibility of the return being single,— "*Ibis! redibis?*" etc.

"Come, we have not a moment to lose," exclaimed Borodaile, hastening down the stairs; and Mr. Percy Bobus followed, with a strange mixture of various regrets, partly for the breakfast that *was* lost, and partly for the friend that *might be*.

When they arrived at the ground, Clarence and the duke were already there; the latter, who was a dead shot, had fully persuaded himself that Clarence was

equally adroit, and had, in his providence for Borodaile, brought a surgeon. This was a circumstance of which the viscount, in the plenitude of his confidence for himself and indifference for his opponent, had never once dreamed.

The ground was measured, — the parties were about to take the ground. All Linden's former agitation was vanished: his mien was firm, grave, and determined, but he showed none of the careless and fierce hardihood which characterized his adversary; on the contrary, a close observer might have remarked something sad and dejected amidst all the tranquillity and steadiness of his brow and air.

"For Heaven's sake," whispered the duke, as he withdrew from the spot, "square your body a little more to your left, and remember your exact level. Borodaile is much shorter than you."

There was a brief, dread pause; the signal was given, Borodaile fired: his ball pierced Clarence's side; the wounded man staggered one step, but fell not. He raised his pistol; the duke bent eagerly forward; an expression of disappointment and surprise passed his lips: Clarence had fired in the air. The next moment Linden felt a deadly sickness come over him, — he fell into the arms of the surgeon. Borodaile, touched by a forbearance which he had so little right to expect, hastened to the spot. He leaned over his adversary in greater remorse and pity than he would have readily confessed to himself. Clarence unclosed his eyes; they dwelt for one moment upon the subdued and earnest countenance of Borodaile.

"Thank God," he said faintly, "that *you* were not the victim," and with those words he fell back insensible. They carried him to his lodgings. His wound

was accurately examined. Though not mortal, it was of a dangerous nature; and the surgeons ended a very painful operation, by promising a very lingering recovery.

What a charming satisfaction for being insulted!

VOL. I. — 20

CHAPTER XLVI.

Je me contente de ce qui peut s'écrire, et je rêve tout ce qui peut se rêver.¹ — DE SÉVIGNÉ.

ABOUT a week after his wound, and the second morning of his return to sense and consciousness, when Clarence opened his eyes, they fell upon a female form seated watchfully and anxiously by his bedside. He raised himself in mute surprise, and the figure, startled by the motion, rose, drew the curtain, and vanished. With great difficulty he rang his bell. His valet, Harrison, on whose mind, though it was of no very exalted order, the kindness and suavity of his master had made a great impression, instantly appeared.

"Who was that lady?" asked Linden, — "how came she here?"

Harrison smiled: "Oh, sir, pray please to lie down, and make yourself easy. The lady knows you very well, and *would* come here; she insists upon staying in the house, so we made up a bed in the drawing-room, and she has watched by you night and day. She speaks very little English to be sure, but your honor knows, begging your pardon, how well I speak French."

"French!" said Clarence, faintly, — "French? In Heaven's name, who is she?"

"A Madame — Madame — La Melonveal, or some such name, sir," said the valet.

¹ I content myself with writing what I am able, and I dream all I possibly can dream.

Clarence fell back. At that moment his hand was pressed. He turned, and saw Talbot by his side. The kind old man had not suffered La Meronville to be Linden's only nurse, — notwithstanding his age and peculiarity of habits, he had fixed his abode all the day in Clarence's house, and at night, instead of returning to his own home, had taken up his lodgings at the nearest hotel.

With a jealous and anxious eye to the real interest and respectability of his adopted son, Talbot had exerted all his address, and even all his power, to induce La Meronville, who had made her settlement previous to Talbot's, to quit the house, but in vain. With that obstinacy which a Frenchwoman, when she is sentimental, mistakes for nobility of heart, the *ci-devant amante* of Lord Borodaile insisted upon watching and tending one of whose sufferings, she said and believed, she was the unhappy though innocent cause: and whenever more urgent means of removal were hinted at, La Meronville flew to the chamber of her beloved, apostrophized him in a strain worthy of one of D'Arlincourt's heroines, and, in short, was so unreasonably outrageous, that the doctors, trembling for the safety of their patient, obtained from Talbot a forced and reluctant acquiescence in the settlement she had obtained.

Ah! what a terrible creature a Frenchwoman is, when, instead of coquetting with a *caprice*, she insists upon conceiving a *grande passion*. Little, however, did Clarence, despite his vexation when he learned of the *bienveillance* of La Meronville, foresee the whole extent of the consequences it would entail upon him: still less did Talbot, who in his seclusion knew not the celebrity of the handsome adventuress, calculate upon the notoriety of her motions, or the ill effect her ostentatious attach-

ment would have upon Clarence's prosperity as a lover to Lady Flora. In order to explain these consequences more fully, let us, for the present, leave our hero to the care of the surgeon, his friends, and his would-be mistress; and while he is more rapidly recovering than the doctors either hoped or presaged, let us renew our acquaintance with a certain fair correspondent.

LETTER FROM THE LADY FLORA ARDENNE TO MISS ELEANOR
TREVANION.

MY DEAREST ELEANOR, — I have been very ill, or you would sooner have received an answer to your kind, — too kind and consoling letter. Indeed, I have only just left my bed. They say that I have been delirious, and I believe it; for you cannot conceive what terrible dreams I have had. But these are all over now, and every one is so kind to me, — my poor mother above all! It is a pleasant thing to be ill when we have those who love us to watch our recovery.

I have only been in bed a few days; yet it seems to me as if a long portion of my existence were past, — as if I had stepped into a new era. You remember that my last letter attempted to express my feelings at mamma's speech about Clarence, and at my seeing him so suddenly. Now, dearest, I cannot but look on that day, on these sensations, as on a distant dream. Every one is so kind to me, mamma caresses and soothes me so fondly, that I fancy I must have been under some illusion. I am sure they could not seriously have meant to forbid *his* addresses. No, no; I feel that all will yet be well, — so well, that even you, who are of so contented a temper, will own that if you were not Eleanor you would be Flora.

I wonder whether Clarence knows that I have been ill. I wish you knew him. — Well, dearest, this letter — a very unhandsome return, I own, for yours — must content you at present, for they will not let me write more, — though, so far

as I am concerned, I am never so weak, in frame I mean, but what I could scribble to *you* about *him*. — *Addio, carissima*,
F. A.

I have prevailed on mamma, who wished to sit by me and amuse me, to go to the opera to-night, the only amusement of which she is particularly fond. Heaven forgive me for my insincerity, but *he* always comes into our box, and I long to hear some news of him.

LETTER II.

FROM THE SAME TO THE SAME.

ELEANOR, dearest Eleanor, I am again very ill, but not as I was before, ill from a foolish vexation of mind ; no, I am now calm, and even happy. It was from an increase of cold only that I have suffered a relapse. You may believe this, I assure you, in spite of your well-meant but bitter jests upon my infatuation, as you very rightly call it, for Mr. Linden. You ask me what news from the opera ? Silly girl that I was, to lie awake hour after hour, and refuse even to take my draught, lest I should be surprised into sleep, till mamma returned. I sent Jermyn down directly I heard her knock at the door (oh, how anxiously I had listened for it !) to say that I was still awake and longed to see her. So, of course, mamma came up, and felt my pulse, and said it was very feverish, and wondered the draught had not composed me, — with a great deal more to the same purpose, which I bore as patiently as I could till it was my turn to talk ; and then I admired her dress and her *coiffure*, and asked if it was a full house, and whether the *prima donna* was in voice, etc., etc. : till, at last, I won my way to the inquiry of who were her visitors. “ Lord Borodaile,” said she, “ and the Duke of — , and Mr. St. George, and Captain Leslie, and Mr. de Retz, and many others.” I felt so disappointed, Eleanor, but did not dare ask whether he was not of the list ; till at last my mother, observing me narrowly, said, “ And, by the by, Mr. Linden looked in for a few minutes. I am glad, my dearest Flora,

that I spoke to you so decidedly about him the other day." "Why, mamma?" said I, hiding my face under the clothes. "Because," said she, in rather a raised voice, "he is quite unworthy of you! — but it is late now, and you should go to sleep, — to-morrow I will tell you more."

I would have given worlds to press the question then, but could not venture. Mamma kissed and left me. I tried to twist her words into a hundred meanings, but in each I only thought that they were dictated by some worldly information, — some new doubts as to his birth or fortune; and, though that supposition distressed me greatly, yet it could not alter my love, or deprive me of hope; and so I cried and guessed, and guessed and cried, till at last I cried myself to sleep.

When I awoke, mamma was already up, and sitting beside me: she talked to me for more than an hour upon ordinary subjects, till at last, perceiving how absent or rather impatient I appeared, she dismissed Jermyn, and spoke to me thus: —

"You know, Flora, that I have always loved you, more perhaps than I ought to have done, more certainly than I have loved your brothers and sisters; but you were my eldest child, my first-born, and all the earliest associations of a mother are blent and entwined with you. You may be sure, therefore, that I have ever had only your happiness in view, and that it is only with a regard to that end that I now speak to you."

I was a little frightened, Eleanor, by this opening, but I was much more touched, so I took mamma's hand, and kissed and wept silently over it, she continued: "I observed Mr. Linden's attention to you, at —. I knew nothing more of his rank and birth then than I do at present; but his situation in the embassy and his personal appearance naturally induced me to suppose him a gentleman of family, and therefore if not a great, at least not an inferior match for you, so far as worldly distinctions are concerned. Added to this, he was uncommonly handsome, and had that general reputation for talent which is often better than actual wealth or hereditary titles. I therefore did not check, though I would not encour-

age any attachment you might form for him; and nothing being declared or decisive on either side when we left —, I imagined that if your flirtation with him did even amount to a momentary and girlish fantasy, absence and change of scene would easily and rapidly efface the impression. I believe that in a great measure it *was* effaced, when Lord Aspeden returned to England, and with him, Mr. Linden. You again met the latter in society almost as constantly as before; a caprice nearly conquered, was once more renewed; and in my anxiety that you should marry, not for aggrandizement, but happiness, I own to my sorrow, that I rather favored than forbade his addresses. The young man — remember, Flora — appeared in society as the nephew and heir of a gentleman of ancient family and considerable property; he was rising in diplomacy, popular in the world, and so far as we could see, of irreproachable character; this must plead my excuse for tolerating his visits, without instituting further inquiries respecting him, and allowing your attachment to proceed without ascertaining how far it had yet extended. I was awakened to a sense of my indiscretion by an inquiry, which Mr. Linden's popularity rendered general, — namely, if Mr. Talbot was his uncle, who was his father, who his more immediate relations? — and at that time Lord Borodaile informed us of the falsehood, he had either asserted or allowed to be spread, in claiming Mr. Talbot as his relation. This you will observe entirely altered the situation of Mr. Linden with respect to you. Not only his rank in life became uncertain, but suspicious. Nor was this all: his very personal respectability was no longer unimpeachable. Was this dubious and intrusive person, without a name, and with a sullied honor, to be your suitor? No, Flora; and it was from this indignant conviction that I spoke to you some days since. Forgive me, my child, if I was less cautious, less confidential than I am now. I did not imagine the wound was so deep, and thought that I should best cure you by seeming unconscious of your danger. The case is now changed; your illness has convinced me of my fault, and the extent of your unhappy attachment; but will my own dear child pardon me if I still continue, if I even con-

firm, my disapproval of her choice? Last night at the opera Mr. Linden entered my box. I own that I was cooler to him than usual. He soon left us, and after the opera I saw him with the Duke of Haverfield, one of the most incorrigible *roués* of the day, leading out a woman of notoriously bad character, and of the most ostentatious profligacy. He might have had some propriety, some decency, some concealment at least, but he passed just before me, — before the mother of the woman to whom his vows of honorable attachment were due, and who at that very instant was suffering from her infatuation for him. Now, Flora, for this man, an obscure, and possibly a plebeian adventurer, whose only claim to notice has been founded on falsehood, whose only merit, a love of you, has been, if not utterly destroyed, at least polluted and debased, — for this man, poor alike in fortune, character, and honor, can you any longer profess affection or esteem?"

"Never, never, never!" cried I, springing from the bed, and throwing myself upon my mother's neck. "Never: I am your own Flora once more. I will never suffer any one again to make me forget you," — and then I sobbed so violently that mamma was frightened, and made me lie down, and left me to sleep. Several hours have passed since then, and I could not sleep nor think, and I would not cry, for he is no longer worthy of my tears; so I have written to you.

Oh, how I despise and hate myself for having so utterly, in my vanity and folly, forgotten my mother, that dear, kind, constant friend, who never cost me a single tear, but for my own ingratitude. Think, Eleanor, what an affront to me, — to me, who, he so often said, had made all other women worthless in his eyes. Do I hate him? No, I cannot hate. Do I despise? No, I will not despise; but I will forget him, and keep my contempt and hatred for myself.

God bless you, — I am worn out. Write soon, or rather come, if possible, to your affectionate but unworthy friend,

F. A.

Good Heavens! Eleanor, he is wounded. He has fought with Lord Borodaile. I have just heard it; Jermyn told me.

Can it, can it be true? What, — what have I said against him? Hate? — forget? No, no! I never loved him till now.

LETTER III.

FROM THE SAME TO THE SAME.

(After an interval of several weeks.)

TIME has flown, my Eleanor, since you left me, after your short but kind visit, with a heavy but healing wing. I do not think I shall ever again be the giddy girl I have been; but my head will change, not my heart: *that* was never giddy, and that shall still be as much yours as ever. You are wrong in thinking I have not forgotten, at least renounced all affection for Mr. Linden. I have, though with a long and bitter effort. The woman for whom he fought, went, you know, to his house, immediately on hearing of his wound. She has continued with him ever since. He had the audacity to write to me once; my mother brought me the note, and said nothing. She read my heart aright. I returned it unopened. He has even called since his convalescence. Mamma was not at home to him. I hear that he looks pale and altered. I hope not, — at least, I cannot resist praying for his recovery. I stay within entirely: the season is now over, and there are no parties; but I tremble at the thought of meeting him even in the Park or the Gardens. Papa talks of going into the country next week. I cannot tell you how eagerly I look forward to it; and you will then come and see me, — will you not, dearest Eleanor?

Ah! what happy days we will have yet; we will read Italian together, as we used to do; you shall teach me your songs, and I will instruct you in mine; we will keep birds as we did — let me see — eight years ago. You will never talk to me of my folly: let that be as if it had never been; but I will wonder with you about your future choice, and grow happy in anticipating your happiness. Oh, how selfish I was some weeks ago, — then I could only overwhelm you

with my egotisms ; now, Eleanor, it is your turn, and you shall see how patiently I will listen to yours. Never fear that you can be too prolix : the diffuser you are, the easier I shall forgive myself.

Are you fond of poetry, Eleanor ? I used to say so, but I never felt that I was till lately. I will show you my favorite passages in my favorite poets when you come to see me. You shall see if yours correspond with mine. I am so impatient to leave this horrid town, where everything seems dull, yet feverish, — insipid, yet false. Shall we not be happy when we meet ? If your dear aunt will come with you, she shall see how I (that is, my mind) am improved. — Farewell. Ever your most affectionate,

F. A.

END OF VOL. I.

